The Dreams of Youth

Walter Amos Morgan

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THE DREAMS OF YOUTH

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BY

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TO
MY CHILDREN
RUTH AND RAYMOND
WHO HAVE GIVEN TO ME A SURE FAITH
IN THE WORTH OF THE
COMING GENERATION

FOREWORD

What is Real? Often have the great of the earth pondered this question. The answer of one generation may not bring assurance to another. What affords satisfaction to one man is only husks to his brother. When the heart is confident it has started upon the way that will lead to the meaning of things the judgment usually is based upon an insight that comes after much seeking and then remains as an abiding possession. The other day such an insight came to me.

I had been driving alone along Michigan Boulevard and marveling at the works of man. Here the great lake was being thrown back and ground was being made for the growth of the city. The hurry of automobiles and buses along the thoroughfare impressed me as a sign of the restlessness of our age. I drew up by the curb to watch the throngs as they passed and to meditate upon the meaning of a city that counted human beings in terms of millions.

Just across from where I had parked my car men were building a huge skyscraper. The steel girders were all in place and the cement work had

been carried up to the twentieth floor. High beyond this the network of steel beams showed me how much higher the mammoth structure really was to be. Groups of workmen were busy going and coming, and engines lifted elevators laden with human freight and wet cement high towards the top of the building. Before long the stagings would be removed and there would be a thing of utility and beauty. Rich corporations would have their offices there and business would be transacted that would influence countless lives in our own land and beyond the sea. How many trains loaded with goods would be sent upon their way because of what men said in that building? How many laden ships would turn their prows toward the open sea because of decisions made there? As I reflected upon all the power of brain that went into the plan of the building, all the might of labor that was necessary for its erection, and all the greatness of achievement that would be accomplished there, I wondered at the greatness of man. "Surely," I said, "here is a symbol of our marvelous civilization."

That afternoon I visited a sick girl in West Side Chicago. She had been ill with a fever, but the flush had left her cheeks and a peaceful look had settled in her eyes. It was a joy to visit her because she always welcomed me with a smile and held on to my hand when I rose to go. Upon this day

I found her well on the way toward recovery. Her mother left me alone with her for a few moments while she went upon an errand to a nearby store. Soon the girl looked at me and said, "I am so glad you came to-day, although I was not lonely."

"Tell me, Mary," I said, "what were you doing before I came?"

"Oh, just thinking, that is all."

"What were you thinking about?"

"Oh, nothing much. Just the things I am going to do when I am a woman."

Then my insight came to me. I dared to believe that the road to the Real is not along the way that erects skyscrapers as much as it is in the dreams of a girl. "Good luck, Mary, and God bless you," I said, as her mother returned.

Outside that door I paused for a moment before I covered my head. My heart knew that within that home was the hope of our human kind. Where are we to find Reality, if not in the dreams of youth?

MY DEAR CHILDREN:

Do you remember, Ruth dear, when you used to climb upon my knee and lisp, "Tell me a story, Papa?" Can you recall how you and I and another girl, your own age, mystic but real, by the name of Jibbergabble, always went with us to strange places and saw wonderful things and met lovely people? One night you said to me, your blue eyes full of questioning wonder, "Are Jibbergabble and I the same girl, Papa?"

Perhaps you will recall, Raymond boy, when later you came with your sister and listened often beyond bedtime, with no sleep in your big brown eyes, to the stories as the fire burned low upon the hearth in the old parsonage at Dover. Then I had to add another character, a boy your own age by the name of Jabbergabble. To me the journeys with such companions were full of wonder and while the stories were impromptu and often with no evident moral, still we journeyed far, Ruth and Jibbergabble, you and Jabbergabble, and I.

Life is such a journey, children of mine, and if we are fortunate enough to find its meaning it can be told in a story.

Then the time came when you went with your

mother to church and listened to me preach. I wanted you, along with other children of the churches in Dover, Washington and Chicago, to have some share, all your own, in the service of worship. So I began to tell a simple story that would embody the lesson of the sermon to the older people. In this book of yours are some of these stories. Others are here, also, that I have told you on evenings when we were alone in the parsonage in Washington. They are not intimate as were the tales of Jibbergabble and Jabbergabble, but a common thread runs through the ones of earlier years by the fireside, and these.

Life is ever a response to the word "Go." So you are going from the time of listening to stories towards the time when you will tell stories to those who make of you the age-old request. If you ever find joy in these I shall be amply repaid for telling them and then writing them down. May the story of your lives be full of peace through the strength that comes from happy memories and the dreams of youth.

YOUR FATHER.

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THE DREAMS OF YOUTH

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THE DAY A PICTURE LIVED

MARY had a picture gallery all her own. The wonder of it was she could walk into the gallery whenever she wanted to and look upon the lovely pictures hanging on the walls. Perhaps one day while walking in the park she would sit down to rest for a moment in the shade of a tree. Right there in the park she could walk into her gallery and sit before her favorite picture. Sometimes at night, before she went to sleep she would close her eyes and take a step, and there she would be in a quiet nook looking at the wonder paintings on the wall.

In Mary's gallery were pictures of blue and yellow birds with golden wings, and sometimes she could hear them sing. The songs always reminded her of a field of daisies with a brook running through it, and willows by the brook. No sooner would she think of the field than there it would be in a picture on her wall. Very often Mary saw paintings of fragile dolls that were made in far away Japan, and the dolls would wink at her, and

smile in their frames. Frequently she would see a road and an old white house, and gaze at the walk winding among lilacs up to the veranda and think of what might be beyond in the pleasant living-room and in the sleeping-rooms upstairs.

But there was one picture Mary loved better than all the others. It was the likeness of a lovely lady, fair faced, with laughing blue eyes and wavy hair all brown that broke away in ringlets over her head and neck. Often the lady would smile at her from the frame and frequently whisper to her wonderful words. Her voice was as quiet as the winds that sighed through the trees in front of her window at night, and her ways were as gentle as the brook that laughed through her little field in the summer weather. Sometimes this gentle lady would have a little girl by the hand whose eyes were also blue and whose hair wandered in waving ringlets of brown all over her head and were tousled down over her eyes. There were hours when the lovely lady and Mary would talk together and smile into each other's eyes. Often she called her "my dream lady" because just before she fell asleep she would see that smiling face leading her out into the realm of rest.

So the days sped quickly away and the weeks passed like the brook that flowed by her window. The months went by, one by one. After the years,

schooldays were over and still Mary had her picture gallery and there she spent quiet moments when her hands were not busy and her mind was free to wander as it would. The lady still was there, with her smile and the little girl.

Of course you know without my telling, what Mary became when she grew to be a woman. What else could a girl with a picture gallery like that become, except an artist? The pictures she painted with brushes and colors on great and small canvases were very beautiful. People came from far and near to see them, and sometimes they were hung among the paintings of famous artists in a far-away city.

One never-to-be-forgotten day Mary took her own little girl into her studio where her pictures and her paints were all about. After showing her many paintings of hills and the ocean in the moonlight, she led her to the picture she had tried to paint of the lovely lady she had known so long. Of all the pictures she had painted she loved this one the best. And yet there was a sorrow in her heart because she never had been able to catch with brush and paint just the beauty of the face she knew so well. She saw the smiling eyes as clearly as she saw the laughter in her daughter's eyes, but her hand had not the cunning to paint them true to life.

Standing before the canvas her little girl with blue and happy eyes asked Mary questions that little girls always ask their mothers. Then, hand in hand, they went downstairs towards the garden where they were to gather flowers for the evening meal when father would come home. As they passed down the hall together Mary glanced into the long mirror, and lo, the miracle had happened! The most wonderful thing in all the world had come to pass. She looked into the glass and into the eyes of the one before her, and saw the little girl with the blue eyes and the tousled curls all over her head, clinging to her hand. She knew then what she had never known before: the beautiful picture that had so long hung on the wall of her dreams was there before her. In her own eyes she saw the wonder and the gladness that had looked at her through all the years from the gallery of her heart.

THE LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER

OFF the New Hampshire coast are the Isles of Shoals. On a clear day, as you see them from Little Boar's Head, they resemble gray rocks, strung along the water half way between the shore and the horizon. Captain John Smith discovered them when he first sailed along the coast and for many years they bore his name. For a few days I once was a visitor on one of these islands and I learned a lesson that I never can forget.

The Oceanic Hotel is on Star Island. Just across a narrow neck of water is White Island, and on a point of rock, reaching out into the Atlantic and facing Spain, is White Island Light. Of course, you all know that a lighthouse is a high tower facing the sea, with a great lamp at the top. At night time the rays of this lamp are sent far out over the ocean, so that sailors can see the light and steer away from the rocks and be safe on the open sea. Into my room at the Oceanic came the rays of White Island Light. Flash, flash, all through the dark hours would the beams of the warning signal fill my room with brightness and then leave it dark again. Long after I might have been asleep I

lay awake, thinking of the light and the keeper who lived in a small cottage close to the base of the tower.

But of course one could not think alone of the light and the faithful soul who kept it burning. Sailors were far out upon the ocean and their eyes often would be turned towards the flashing signal just beyond my window. I could imagine one sailor saying to another, "There is the White Island Light; we are off the New Hampshire coast." Another might say to himself, "Well, well, there is the light on White Island. By daybreak we shall be in Boston."

Then I thought of the light when there was a nor'easter and the waves were dashing over the headlands. At times like that, perhaps, some captain would be wondering about the breakers on great rocks. Was his good ship in the course and were all on board safe from danger? Just then he would see the gleaming light and thank God that wise men had set signals on all the bold headlands and rocky islands along the shore. Now he was sure of his course and even though the waves broke over the bow of his ship he spoke with confidence to the helmsman, "Keep her on the course; to leeward is White Island Light."

Oh, the wonder of the ship and the sailor and the beacon in the darkness gleaming over the waves

that laugh in the starlight and bellow in the storm. The keeper of the light is a guardian of the deep. Upon him the captain depends when his ship is in danger. Because he trims the wicks, mothers tuck their children in their berths and say, "Good night," without fear. Through his faithfulness in polishing the glass many pilots catch the signal and keep their ships upon the course. In spite of the night and the open sea the lonely man on shipboard knows, "Yonder is the land," because the keeper of the light has filled the great lamp with oil and lighted it at sunset.

Long did I stay awake in my bed that night on the island off the New Hampshire coast, and think about the light that flashed through my window. And then I knew that every boy and girl is a lighthouse keeper upon some bold headland or rocky island.

The next day, upon the path back of the hotel, I heard a mother say, "Fred, please go back and bring sister's coat. It will be cool upon the rocks." Then Fred began to grumble. Why didn't they bring it in the first place? Why should he have to go for it? Seems as though they always were forgetting something. How he did sputter. At last he went, but his face was covered with frowns that looked like thunder clouds. I wanted to put my hand on his shoulder and say, "For shame,

Fred. You have forgotten to polish the windows and there is a storm upon the deep."

Late that afternoon I rowed over to Appledore Island. There were blueberry bushes all around and I thought, "Why not eat a few blueberries, and then dream a while as I look at the sea?" The berries were as luscious as any I ever had eaten. Then the sheltered nook among the rocks, where the sun came streaming in, gave me ample opportunity to dream of Captain John Smith and Indian canoes and pirates of long ago.

Soon I heard voices. Had the pirates returned, or were they merely picnickers who were wandering around the island? The voices became clearer and then I could hear all that was said.

"Do you know, she made me so angry. I expected to lead my class and everybody else thought I would, too. But she slyly worked hard and the teachers said she had beaten me. No one ever paid any attention to her before. You just wait, I'll get even with her yet. She can not play that trick on me and not pay for it."

I could not see her face but I knew from the sound of her voice how it looked. There was danger ahead. A storm was gathering and the keeper had neglected the light. There would be no shining signal when the darkness came.

After supper that evening we had a wonderful

sunset. Far away to the west was the mainland with all the miles of golden water in between. Agamenticus, the purple mountain, was a lone sentinel upon the shore. Everybody was silent in wonder as we looked upon the glimmering beauty of a day passing beyond the ocean and the hills.

Just as the changing scene reached that lovely moment when the gold is becoming purple a small child began to cry. She had been sleeping in a great chair that was half bed where her mother had placed her in the cool of the evening breeze. I remembered then that the child had been ill. Sickness had almost worn the little body away. The weary mother had brought her, with an older sister, in order that the quiet and the pure air might win her back to health again. Of course, everybody was disturbed at the plaintive cry of a sick child. A few grumbled and one old man said, "Take the kid away."

At the sound of the first cry the older sister appeared. "Oh mother, let me have sister and I will amuse her and keep her quiet until it is quite dark and you come to put her to bed." She carried the sick child in her arms into the hotel and all was silent again. As the older sister passed me I saw her face, and upon it was a light more wonderful than the sunset.

Then I sat alone by the veranda rail and watched

the west and dreamed of the ocean and sailors and the lighthouse just beyond my bedroom window. Before I slept that night I would write that older sister a letter. It would be a short one and this is what I wanted to say.

My dear little Lighthouse Keeper:

I saw the light in your face as you passed me tonight with your sister in your arms. The horizon is clear now and the west is purple with beauty. But beyond there are clouds. Storms will break and great waves will dash over the headlands. I shall not fear for you, or for those who love you. You have burnished the glass and trimmed the wicks and filled your lamp with oil. When night comes and there is danger upon the deep your light will shine far out over the waters.

When I went up to my room I sat by the window. The ocean was a great dark mystery. White Island Light was flashing its friendly rays across my face and far, far out to the ships that were upon the face of the darkness. The keeper of the Light had been faithful and all was well.

LOAVES AND LILIES

I ONCE read an old Chinese proverb that ran something like this: "If I had two loaves, I would sell one and buy a lily." Why would a man be foolish enough to do a thing like that? You can eat a loaf and be strong in eating, but who ever heard of eating a lily?

Margaret was going on a long journey away from home. Often in the night she could not go to sleep as she thought with wonder concerning the lands to which she was to go. Then her heart would ache as she remembered the loving friends she had to leave behind. But Margaret was the kind of girl who faced her duty and did it without complaining. So her preparations were well made and she thought of her going with sorrowful and yet expectant heart.

The day before she was to go, a few of her dearest friends came to see her and to bid her goodbye. Just as they were to leave one of them said, "What are you taking with you on your journey, Margaret? We know you must travel lightly and we have often talked together concerning the things you would put into your bag."

This is what Margaret replied. "The journey is to be long and among strange peoples. There will be many days when I shall be crossing the desert with no one with me who can speak the language I have always known here at home. When I arrive at my journey's end there will be many stores in the great city and I can purchase the things I need. But on the way I must carry only a few necessities.

"And first, I shall take money enough to pay all of my bills. In whatever land you travel men and women who serve you must be paid in order that they may buy clothes and bread for themselves and for those who are dear to them.

"Beyond that, I must have a few clothes. Some will be warm for the cold lands through which I journey. Others will be cool and yet stout enough to shelter me from the sirocs when I cross the great desert. All of them must be strong and well made.

"Then I shall put in my bag a few good books that I may read when I am resting. As I read my mind will wander away into other places and often back home to you, my friends.

"The last thing I shall take will be a lily, snow-white and beautiful, from out the little pool at the foot of the garden walk. And that is all."

Margaret's friends looked at each other for a moment in surprise. "We can see, Margaret, why

you must have the money, and of course you need the clothes. The books will be useful by the way. But tell us, pray, why you carry the lily with you on your journey."

You will be interested in knowing what Margaret said in reply. "Ever since I can remember I have looked out upon the little pool at the foot of the garden walk. I have seen it when it was still in the moonlight and the fragrance of the lilies came up to my little room over the garden. Often in the April showers the drops of rain tossed other drops from the surface of the pool up into the air. At other times it has been rough and driven before the winds. On winter days I have skated across the ice that formed in the zero weather. Among all the things I remember about my home the pool is one of the dearest to me. Never did I seem quite so happy as when I could reach my hand into the water and pick a lily and take it in to mother.

"Now I am going upon a journey and I must leave my home and my mother far behind. There will be days when I am lonely, and others when I am tired, and perhaps times when I am ill with fever. Then if I can open a little box and smell the fragrance of the petals of the lily, even though they be faded and dry, I shall be stronger. Shall I not know that they once were white and beautiful, resting upon the bosom of the water in

the little pool at the foot of my garden walk?"

Then her friends said, "Good luck!" and left her. In their hearts they knew that when one goes on a long journey among the priceless things to carry is the happy memory of the days that are left behind.

THE NAUGHTY ROSEBUD

ONE fine spring day there was a rosebud that was naughty in its heart. It grew close by the garden wall not far from the gate. Everyone who passed into the garden or back again to the house had to walk close by the bush on which the rosebud grew. All around it were roses opening in beauty, but this rosebud said in its heart, "Why should I bloom at all?"

One day the rain came and pelted the rosebud. Pat, pat, pelt, pelt came the rain. "Open, naughty rosebud," it called. "Open, naughty rosebud."

The rosebud was only the more determined to have its own way against the rain. "I shall not open my heart at all."

Soon the rain went away but the wind came. All night long it ran through the trees and hurried up and down the garden walks and blew the rosebud against the wall. "Now I've got you," it seemed to say. "Open in the morning or I'll blow you hard again." Rap, rap, rap, beat the rosebud against the wall, and every rap made it reply to the wind, "Blow me as hard as you wish, I will not open at all."

The next day a bee came buzzing down the walk and lit upon rose after rose. Soon it came to the rosebud and called, "Open your heart, naughty rosebud, that I may gather honey. Open your heart for me."

The rosebud only called back to the bee, "I will not open my heart at all."

That afternoon a nursemaid came into the garden, gathering roses. You could hear her shears, clip, clip, as rose after beautiful rose fell into her basket. Soon she came to the rosebud and said, "Naughty rosebud, why have you not opened your heart? You are stubborn and if you do not bloom like the other roses, when I come again I shall cut you off and throw you beside the garden walk."

The rosebud replied, "I will not open my heart even for you."

Along towards sunset a little girl came by the garden wall with scissors in her hand and a basket on her arm, and with her was her mother. She, too, clipped beautiful roses near the rosebud. Then she held the naughty rosebud in her hand and said, "I will not take you, pretty one, until you open your heart to me."

As the girl went away the rosebud said, "If I would open my heart at all, I would open it for you, little girl."

That night the sky was soft and blue and the

moonlight was beautiful in the garden. The gentle wind came whispering to the rosebud saying, "Open your heart, pretty rosebud. Open your heart to me." And the rosebud nodded in the evening wind and its heart was warm with love.

In the morning when the sun was up it sent gentle sunbeam after gentle sunbeam to the rosebud saying, "Open your heart, little rosebud. Open your heart to me." And the rosebud turned its face towards the sun and smiled in the morning weather. In its heart it remembered the caresses of the little girl. "Perhaps she will come again," it said, nodding in the gentle breeze.

On a sunny afternoon the little girl came dancing down the garden walk. Behind her was her mother with her basket and her shears. Soon she heard her daughter call, "Oh Mother, come and see the lovely rose that just the other day was only a rosebud. It has opened its heart to me."

WHO IS AFRAID OF GHOSTS?

THERE had been a rumor in the community that the ghost in the old haunted house had come to life again. Kenneth Roberts said his father had passed the house a few evenings before and had heard strange hammerings and seen a flickering light in the basement. Mistress Bolliver had observed shadows through the windows that were covered with cobwebs and dust. No one had lived in the house for years, and whenever the ghost was mentioned the older and wiser people of the village smiled. Many of the boys had walked by during the past few sunny afternoons when school was out. Some of the boldest even went up to the door. Several of them said they were going to watch at night. Thus far none of them had found time to do that.

Roy had heard the stories, but Roy was too wise to believe them. He said so, to all the boys. Of course there were no such things as ghosts.

One evening when the rumor was at its height and all the boys and girls were talking about it at school, Roy held a long conversation with his father about goblins and ghosts. He said he knew there were no ghosts, and that it was probably some-

body trying to frighten them. If he should happen to see a ghost on the street or in a dark house, he would walk right up to it and say, "Beat it, old man. You can't bluff me." In fact, Roy was so bold in his talk that father began to wonder about boys who are so brave when they are safe at home.

After the fire had burned low and it was somewhat past Roy's bedtime, Father said to him, "Roy, you know that book I was reading. Well, it is over at your Aunt Alice's and I want it for tonight. Just run over and get it for me, please."

Roy's face turned pale. The wind was blowing outside and the lights seemed weird and flickering on the streets. He replied, "I was just going to bed, Father. I'll get it for you in the morning."

"No," his father said. "I want it tonight."

Roy got up and limped across the room. "Father, do you know this old shoe hurts and I am afraid I am going to have a blister."

"I will look at it when you return," his father replied, and continued his reading. As Roy made no move to get ready, his father looked at him through his glasses and a faint smile played across his face. Rising, he took Roy's coat and hat to him. Less than half-heartedly Roy permitted him to help him on with his coat. Just as he reached the door he turned back and said, "Say, Dad, come on; walk

over with me. We'll have a great romp through the night."

Father replied, "I'm busy. Hurry on and come back with the book. I will telephone to Aunt Alice and tell her you are on the way and she will be waiting for you at the door."

Roy was partially pushed out into the darkness, and then he could hardly breathe. Of course there were no such things as ghosts, but the night was dark, the winds were shrill, the lights far apart, and he was all alone. Stuffing his hands in his pockets he tried to whistle as he ran towards Aunt Alice's house. When he rounded a corner a couple of blocks away from home, he had to pass a house well back from the street. Miss Beatty, who loved her flowers and garden, lived there. Roy had just gotten opposite the house when he turned and looked over his shoulder. Horrors! There was an awful thing upon the lawn. It was tall! and white!! and moving!!!

For one moment Roy became like a piece of marble. Without knowing it his face turned towards home. His lips called to him, "A ghost!" His legs shouted up to him, "Beat it." He entered into no discussion with his legs but followed their advice without delay or dignity. No sooner was he well under way than something seemed to say to him, "Play safe, old man. Call for help." With all

his might and main he called, "Help! a ghost! Help! A ghost!" The way he ran showed that he was a boy with but one ambition.

Just after he turned the last corner towards home he bumped into somebody who seemed to be in his way. His first impulse was to clutch at him and push him aside, when all of a sudden he looked up and discovered he had leaped into the arms of his father. Fathers have a way of knowing boys. Roy's first words were, "Come on, dad, quick. There's a ghost."

His father held him fast. "A ghost? I thought there were no such things as ghosts. Where is it, boy?"

Tremblingly, and all the time tugging towards home, he sobbed, "In Miss Beatty's yard."

"Come on, Roy. Let's visit him." Roy didn't want to go but his father insisted. So, clinging to his father's hand, and as far behind him as he could walk, they made their way to Miss Beatty's. He saw the thing as soon as he passed the corner, and jumped in fear. His father called, "Come on. We'll see."

Step by step Roy trembled nearer until at last the truth dawned upon him. Dear Miss Beatty, fearful lest the frost should kill one of her shrubs, had pinned an old gray blanket around it, and it was fluttering in the breeze. When Roy saw it, he

said never a word, and walked all the way home in dejection of spirit.

Just before his father bade him good night, he said, "Roy, old boy, there are no ghosts except the ones that fear raises in the mind. Usually the persons who brag most are the ones who see the ghosts first. Remember, son, what seem to be ghosts, when interviewed, are usually gray blankets fluttering in the wind."

FILLING HIS BASKET

EDWARD was going fishing with his father. Ever since he could remember he had heard stories about the wonderful trips away to the hills and the trout brooks and the fun. Now he was to go and share in all the fishing of the day. Wasn't it wonderful to be grown up enough to go fishing with father?

The night before the great day Edward and his father spent the hours after supper in getting the fishing tackle ready. There was his father's split bamboo pole that he had used for so many years, and the new fishing rod, shining and light, that his father had purchased for him. How smooth and stout were the lines. The hooks with the many colored flies fascinated him. His own new high boots that came up to his hips he was wearing even though it was bedtime. But the thing that pleased him most of all was the new basket. The straps fitted snugly on his shoulders and the basket rested lightly on his hip. "My, but when the basket is full!" he said to himself. "Won't it be great when the basket is full of shining beauties?" He went to sleep that night with the sound of the trout brooks

singing in his ears and a basket full of fish hanging before his eyes.

They were off early in the morning. The sun was scarcely up when they reached the brook. Edward could hardly wait for his first fish. His father said, "Watch me a bit, Ned, and then try for yourself." After he saw the first trout come wriggling out of the water Edward could wait no longer. He threw in his own hook and line, and waited with his heart in his mouth. It was some time before he caught a fish, and then it was only a small one.

When the time had come for him to eat lunch he was so tired, with slipping and climbing, and his basket was only about half full. "Let's go home, Dad. I'm tired."

His father replied, "But what about your basketful? It takes time to fill a basket with fish."

Smiling faintly Ned followed his father back to the brook, but not long after he called again, "Shall we not go now, Dad?"

"Is your basket full?" came back the reply.

"No, not quite."

"What will you tell Mother?"

At that Edward recalled the picture of the full basket and went on his way again. His legs were heavy and his back ached. The new boots had lost their beauty and even the light rod was heavy in

his hand. Yet he fished on. There was one thing that kept him going: it was the picture of the basket full of fish. He held that before his eyes all the time.

Late in the afternoon he called back to his father, "I'm ready now, Dad. I've got my basket full."

Happily they drove home together through the evening weather. The boy was almost asleep when mother greeted them at the door. Joy was in his heart as he shouted, "See, Mother! I have brought you my basket full."

I am wondering if there are not many boys and girls grown older whose baskets are almost empty because they have forgotten the picture of the basket full of fish. Have you filled your basket, or have you reeled up your line and gone home in the middle of the day?

THE ANCIENT ONE

THE two boys had been friends for years. When they were children their parents brought them to the village and it had been the only home they ever remembered. The father and mother of one came from a land in the far south where the sunshine sparkled in sheer brightness on the waters and olive trees grew upon the hills. Like the people of his native land, the boy's hair was as black as night and his voice was as soft and musical as the summer waves upon the beach near his mother's girlhood home.

The parents of the other boy had come from a country in the far north where the summers were short and the winters were long and cold. His hair was as light as the silk of the hardy corn that grew in the meadow lands near his father's home and his voice had in it the strength of the forests and the winds.

These two lads were attracted to each other because of their very differences. Often in the evening would they sit together on the bridge that arched a little stream and share with each other the deeper thoughts that came to them. There would be times when one would sing the old folk

songs of his people that his mother had taught him. His voice would rise and fall with all the soft beauty of a boy whose forebears had been lovers of song. Then the other would tell of his dreams of being a conqueror of great forests and the builder of mighty ships. Only as they talked of the sea were their minds in accord. Both loved the smell of the salt and the dash of spray. In the blood of each there was a strain of some forebear who had lived and died a sailor. Like true friends they revelled in their comradeship and often sat enthralled as they talked of the wonders of great ships and the people who lived in lands beyond.

The miracle of time wrought itself out with these boys even as it has with all boys since the beginning. Both changed with the years and as their bodies increased their minds grew toward maturity. At last the day came when each wished to go and win his own way in the world. They at first thought they would go together but this they could not do. Their hearts led them in opposite directions. One wanted to visit the home of his people and walk along the shore his mother knew and breathe the air of the hills where his father had gathered grapes in the vineyards long ago. The other was homesick for the great forests and the sound of winter winds howling down from the mountains and around the dwellings. Had he not heard, ever

since he could remember, of the storms his father had known and the mountain heights his mother had scaled, even as a girl? To no other land could he go and feel that he was making his dreams come true. So they decided to go their separate ways. But each gave to the other a promise that he would write letters very often and even as they always had done would they share their confidences and their plans.

On the morning of their departure, they were talking together for the last time. Their hearts were full of many memories and high hopes. Just before they said goodbye they went together to visit the Ancient One who had lived in the village ever since they could remember. No one could recall the time when he had not lived there. His little cottage on a quiet street had a well-beaten path to the door and there any visitor always would find him in the hour of need. So the boys found him waiting for them at the gate. He smiled a welcome to them as they entered. They talked of many things and he gave them good advice about the ways of the world beyond the village and how life may always have a great peace. Just as they were to leave, the Ancient One took down from the wall of his home a great bag and from it took two knapsacks with straps on them. He strapped one on the shoulders of each of the boys and said, "My young

friends, everyone who leaves the village must wear a knapsack like the ones I have put upon your shoulders. For many, many years have I been strapping them upon the backs of men. I have fastened the strap with a clasp and I alone have the key. You can not take them off your back, even if you wish. True, they may become as great weights as the years pass. And again they may be as wings to make your burdens lighter and to help you on your way. It all depends upon yourselves. Good speed, my friends. I shall be waiting for you whenever you may return." As the boys left the home of the Ancient One they met a traveller, dust-stained and bent, coming up the path towards the door.

Again the years rolled off the wheel of time. One lad grew to manhood and then to age as he walked along the beach his mother had known, and labored with companions among the olive trees on the hills. The other shouldered his years with sturdy but at last failing strength as he mastered the great forests and became acquainted with the rough winter winds his father had known in other years. Their hearts lived often in the little village they had loved as lads and at last they wrote to each other about returning for a happy day of reunion.

After many weeks the day arrived when they met again. At first they did not know each other. After the wonder of the meeting the old looks

came back and the old voices rang again with something of the joy of youth. Long did they talk of the days they had been together as friends and of the experiences that had come to each in the years of their separation. How their minds roamed back to boyhood and all along the roads that led from that far-away time to the day they returned to the village.

"Do you remember how we visited the Ancient One on the day we departed?" said one of them.

"Yes. And do you recall how he strapped knapsacks upon our backs?"

"Yes, I remember. And do you know, mine has become heavier and heavier, until at times it has seemed to me as though I could not carry its weight any longer. It has galled my back and wearied my spirit and been a burdensome thing."

"How strange!" said the other. "The one he strapped upon my back has often been forgotten. At other times it has been light and airy, as though it would take burdens from my shoulders. Only a very few times has it ever been as a weight to me, and then not for long. As I was on my way back home it seemed to me as though the knapsack was a wing that was helping me on my way."

They decided to visit the Ancient One, if he were living still, and ask him why the difference between the two knapsacks upon the shoulders of

the men. The familiar way to his cottage had not changed in the years. As they walked up the path they met a young man leaving his gate. They found the Ancient One just as they had left him, waiting for them with a smile upon his face. Soon they told him of their lives and of their happiness at being home again. Before long they related to him the story of the knapsacks upon their backs. A look of tenderness crossed the face of the Ancient One as he took a key from around his neck and unlocked the bags and took them from the shoulders of the friends.

As he opened the knapsack of the one who had found it a burdensome thing there flew out black and awkward shapes, like dwarfed beings half animals and half birds. The light of the sun was disagreeable to them and the pure air of the place they did not enjoy. They were the memories of the days the man wished he might forget.

When the Ancient One opened the knapsack of the other there flew out bright and airy creatures, as beautiful as moonbeams and as free as summer winds. They resembled fair winged birds that loved the sunlight and floated upon the air. They were the memories of the days that brought joy to the heart of the man.

As they left the home of the Ancient One they met two young men walking towards his gate.

A BOX OF WORDS

JACK owned a box. One of the strange things about it was this: as Jack grew the box also grew with him. What do you suppose he carried in his box? His lunch? Not in this one, although Jack always saw to it that he had a box for his lunch, and that it was large enough to hold all he wanted to eat. Marbles? No, indeed. What boy would carry his marbles in a box when he could have a bag? Then, of course, it was pencils. That is a warm guess but not the right one.

Let me tell you before we spend any more time in guessing the answer. In this particular box Jack carried words. They were his words, and all the words he knew. New ones were being added from time to time, and let us hope that a few he carried in his box were being lost. There were all kinds of words. A few were in neat piles and others were strewn about. Some were short and others were long; so long, in fact, that Jack could not spell them all. Other words were pretty and pleasant to hear, while some were ugly and harsh. There were words that always brought smiles to his friends' faces, and a few that were sharp and

scratchy like pins. When he used these words he always felt ill at ease and his friends winced as though someone had struck them with a switch. There the words were, all in Jack's box, and he could use any of them he wished at any time it pleased him.

Jack and Fred were good friends. But once in a while, like many good friends I know, they did not agree. Upon one day in particular they were having a few words at school. The whole affair arose over a ball game. Jack said he was safe at second base, and Fred said he was out.

"You never touched me."

"Yes, I did, too. I'll leave it to Ed."

"Of course; Ed is on your side."

"Well, what of that? Do you think we would tell a lie?"

"Do you think I would, either?"

I am not going to tell you any more of their conversation, because it went from bad to worse. They still were sputtering about it when the bell rang. As they walked toward the schoolroom the teacher heard them. She was shocked. They were such pals, and now they were quarreling. As they passed her on the way to their seats she said, "Jack and Fred, you may stay in at recess. After school is dismissed this afternoon please remain in your seats until I have had a talk with you."

All the long afternoon Jack was full of hot feelings and Fred was sulking with a bad temper. They looked at each other a few times, but there was no gentle friendship in the eyes of either. The recess period was the hardest of all. The other pupils could be heard shouting at their play. Jack pretended to be looking at pictures in his geography, and Fred gave the impression that he was reading his history lesson. The teacher paid no attention to them.

At last school closed and the children went home. Of course, Jack and Fred remained, because that was part of their punishment for quarreling about a game of ball. The teacher wanted to help the boys back to their old friendship again so she decided to talk to them separately. After she had told Jack what was upon her heart she let him go home. When he was once outside the room his anger flamed up again. He would wait for Fred and tell him exactly what he thought of him.

Right then and there Jack began to hunt in his box for the words he wanted to use. There were the pretty words, strewn all about. These he passed by. In regular piles and very close to them were the soft and pleasant words that always brought smiles to the faces of his friends. He had no use for these. Next to them were some sharp pointed words, and not far away were a few ugly and harsh

words. He toyed with these before he made his decision as to which he would use. This is the sentence he formed, ready to shout it out as soon as Fred should appear at the door. "Hey, smarty; so you say you touched me, do you? Well, you told a lie and I am through with you." He actually felt proud of his choice of words.

Fred did not come out as soon as Jack expected he would, and that gave him time to think. He went over the sentence several times. They were rather hard words, for old Fred. So he searched in his box again. Ere long he had thrown aside some of his words and found others. This is what he would say. "So you got yours too, did you? Well, it served you right." You will agree with me that the second choice was better than the first.

Still Fred did not come out. Jack thought some more. Suppose Fred did touch me? But he didn't. Yet he might have thought he did. Probably Fred did think so. Whenever they were on the same side Fred could be depended upon to tell the truth. Jack had to admit that. Anyhow, Fred was a good old scout. Did he not come over every night and help him with his lessons when he broke his arm last winter and could not go to school?

Just then Jack went upon another search in his box. It was not long before Fred came out. He looked at Jack. Anything might have happened.

I suspect I would not be telling you this story had not the angels of time and memory been on hand to help the boys out of a hard situation. Jack had searched and found these words, and he called them in his most friendly voice. "Hello, old top. Sorry teacher kept you so long. I really didn't think you touched me, but as long as you say so I know you did. Come on over to my house and then we will go down to the brook for a swim."

Fred looked at him for a moment, and replied, "All right. Come on."

Had you seen them a few minutes later you never would have dreamed there had been a quarrel between them. Jack's arm was around Fred's shoulder as Fred was telling him about a new kind of spliced fishing pole he had seen the other day at Cutting's store.

A BOX OF COLORS

Bob always carried with him a box of colors. If you looked for it you could not find it in his pockets; neither was it in his book bag or in his hand. And yet he carried it with him, wherever he went. This box had a lot to do with Bob's life. As far as that goes, Bob was no different from any boy I know, or girl either. Every one of you carries such a box and often the colors in it change the very looks of everything. Because of these colors every one of you is a painter.

Isn't it a wonderful thing to be a painter? Sometimes a man comes and paints the steps leading up to the front door. For a few days his old ladder will be there and you must go around to the back door when you come home for lunch. But after the ladder is removed, how fresh the steps and porch really are. It has paid to go to all that trouble. Then often our favorite rooms are painted. Of course, it is a lot of bother to be turned out of one's room so the painter can have his way. But when he has gone and we are back again we do like the new color and the clean, fresh smell. Great artists have painted beautiful pictures of famous people and wonderful places. To mix paint with one's own

mind so it can be spread upon a canvas and produce a picture that makes us stand before it and be silent is to do a fine thing. Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to paint like that? Bob could paint, and he almost spoiled a day because of the wrong choice of colors.

Bob had played hard on the baseball team and he thought he ought to be elected captain. Others on the team thought so, too, and they told him as much. Of course this pleased him immensely. "Captain Bob." The name was music in his ears. Wouldn't it be great to run out on the diamond at the head of the team, on the days when important games were to be played? Then whenever the pitcher was in a tight place he could stop the game and walk in from second base, right before everybody, and give him and the catcher some sound advice. Guess folks would know that he had a wise head upon his shoulders.

At last the time came when the members of the team were to elect the new captain. When the vote was counted, Bill had one more vote than Bob. Of course, Bill was declared elected. Then everybody gathered around him and gave him a rousing cheer. I will say this for Bob, he cheered as loudly as he could. But it was not an easy thing for him to do.

No sooner was the cheering over than Bob

brought his paint box into use. Down into it he dived, head first, and came out with a great amount of green paint. Everything in the room he covered over with green. He put an extra amount of it upon Bill. All the faces of the boys were seen to be tinted with that sickly color. When he went out upon the veranda the entire street was as green as the leaves upon the trees. The girls who were chatting upon the lawn seemed to have on green dresses. One of the teachers who was coming up the steps seemed to smile at him with a green curl upon her lips. In fact, it was as though the green paint had just bubbled out of his box and spread itself over everything. Bob was green-eyed in all that he saw.

As he walked down the steps alone he met Peggy. She was Bob's good friend, so he thought; but there were times when he wondered. Her tongue could be very sharp. Today she was in a hurry and she did not think much about what she said. "So you lost out in the election, Bob. Well, well." She might have said, "I am sorry. Better luck next time." But she forgot, or else she didn't care.

As soon as Peggy had passed up the steps Bob used his paint box again. This time there boiled up torrents of red. How he splashed it over everything! The green faded before the tides of red that spread themselves everywhere. The old ball team

was as red as the sweaters they wore and Bill more vivid than any of the others. As for Peggy, she would have been afraid had she seen herself as Bob saw her. In fact, the entire school was dancing in a color that resembled the angry flames that one day ate up a dwelling across the street from where Bob lived. So he made his way home, with the red bubbling up from his box of colors, making all his world a boiling of heat and crimson.

No sooner was Bob alone in his room than he began to reflect upon his ability as a painter. Surely he had not been an artist, thus far. After he had thought the whole matter through, he went down into his box again. This time he came out, slowly, with a great amount of blue paint. Carefully he spread it over everything in sight. The green had about all gone and the red was fading. But the blue was being used in liberal amounts. Strange how such sudden changes can come over a boy's outlook upon things. The entire room was a pale blue. His view through the window revealed a blue street with blue houses up and down on either side. The car in front of a neighbor's home was a faded blue and the people who were walking across the street were all dressed in a sickly blue. In fact, the color ran up to their faces. As Bob thought of the school and the baseball team and next year's games, the blue became so thick that he could hardly see

at all. "Guess my day has passed," he moaned aloud. "Everybody has forgotten old Bob."

No one knows how bad things might have become had not he heard a rap upon his door. Mother came in and spoke to him with all the happiness in the world in her voice. "Oh Bob, I just met the boys and they told me that you had more votes than anyone else, except Bill, for captain of the team. And you are only a sophomore and Bill is a junior. But I am proud of you. Hurry down now, as we are to meet father and go out to the island for supper and then to canoe on the river in the moonlight."

Do you know, a boy's life is a wonderful thing. No sooner had Mother gone than Bob went into his box of colors again. This time he brought out a can of old rose. It had been there all the time. The green had faded and there was not a trace of the red. The blue was vanishing rapidly and a soft tint resembling sunset was settling over the room and the street outside. As he hurried down the stairs there was a golden tinge in the hall.

On their way to the island Bob saw all the landscape in this sunset light. Even next year's ball team he beheld with himself starring at second base. When he was at the bow of the canoe, with his father at the stern and his mother on cushions between them, there was for him a glow more won-

derful than the moonlight. It seemed to break from his paddle as it cut through the water, and even color with shimmering beauty all the shore line and the trees against the sky.

UNCLE OSCAR'S CABIN

UNCLE OSCAR was an old friend of mine. His sister Celia was the writer of beautiful stories about the Isles of Shoals. Uncle Oscar also had written many lovely poems, but it was not because of these that everybody who knew him admired him. We who used to ride among the islands with him in his little power boat knew him and loved him because of his kindly spirit. He was a friendly man, and, like many dwellers by the sea, ruddy of face and strong of arm. I can see him now, as he brings his boat to the wharf to take us for a sail, his white beard flying in the breeze and his happy smile welcoming us aboard.

White Island had been his home for years. Here his father had been the lighthouse keeper, and here Uncle Oscar had learned the ways of the sea. He never did feel at home on the mainland. His heart was always with his islands, and the people who might visit them. One day he took me for a sail and it was while with him that I learned something I want all my little friends to know. It came about because Uncle Oscar took me to his cabin on Londoners Island.

The way up from the shore was rough and

among the rocks. But it was easy to follow, and the loveliest little cabin you ever could wish to see was there at the end of the path. The key was hanging on a nail and the door swung open at the touch of Uncle Oscar's hand upon the latch. Within all was shipshape. The stove had a fire laid and matches were at hand. There was plenty of canned food in the cupboard close by, and the bed was ready for any one who might need a warm dry place in which to sleep. The furniture was stout and comfortable. Magazines were on the table and a few good books on the shelves. Had I been walking a long way and was weary, I could wish for no more comfortable place in which to rest than Uncle Oscar's cabin. All the necessities of life were there, and many of the comforts.

"Who lives here, Uncle Oscar?" I said.

"No one."

"Oh, I see. Then you are planning to live here when the guests all leave the hotel?"

"No, I never shall live here."

"Then surely you are making it ready for some of your friends. A bride and groom, perhaps?"

"Yes, I keep it ready for my friends; but not for a bride and groom."

"How very interesting," I replied, not wanting to press Uncle Oscar to tell me more than he wished about his cabin.

His kindly soul knew that my interest was not colored with idle curiosity. So he told me, in his modest way, the reason why he kept the cabin open and well stocked with provisions and all that men would need, while he often was leagues and leagues away.

The Islands were far off the mainland and their rugged promontories ran like blunt teeth out into the ocean. Ships had been wrecked upon these bold rocks, and their crews had sought shelter upon the Islands. Then often yachting parties had been forced to the shelter of the little harbor beside the cabin. Those on board the pleasure boats had been compelled to remain in the lea of a headland until the storm had passed and the sea was safe again.

Where were such unfortunates as shipwrecked sailors to find food and shelter upon a bleak and rocky island after the guests had departed and the hotel was closed, unless someone kept a cabin ready for them? Who would see to it that storm-driven pleasure seekers, forced to the quiet waters of the wind protected bay, were to have warm and comfortable quarters until the sea was calm, unless someone furnished the cabin and hung the key on a nail outside the door? All the people who might be in need upon the islands he loved were friends of Uncle Oscar. So he kept the cabin ready for them, with a fire all laid and the matches close at hand.

Had you been a shipwrecked sailor on the Isles that autumn when all the guests had departed and Uncle Oscar was far away, you would have found the cabin ready for your every need, even with medicines upon a shelf. After you had lighted the fire and the warmth had begun to make the room more comfortable, you would have found a letter from Uncle Oscar that would have read something like this:

My dear Friend:

You are welcome to the cabin and all that it contains. Use it as long as it can minister to your need. When you go, please leave it shipshape. Some other friend may need it when you have departed. Hang the key on the nail just outside the door, and may God bless you.

Ever since that day when Uncle Oscar took me to his cabin I have wished that I might tell the story to all the boys and girls I know. For we all are liable to be shipwrecked. Our dreams may not come true and our hearts may ache. Perhaps we shall lose our way in the big world and not find it again for days. The cold winds of disappointment and loneliness may blow hard against us. Then shall we not need a cabin where the fire is all laid and there is food in the cupboard and a bed close by?

This is how I prayed that night when I went to my room and looked out of the window over the bay towards Uncle Oscar's cabin.

Oh dear Father, I thank Thee that I have for my friend such a man as Uncle Oscar. Help me to keep a furnished place in my heart for every boy and girl, and boy and girl grown older, who may be shipwrecked and need shelter and warmth. If the winds blow and the waves run high, may they find in me a cabin of refuge. Here may they rest and then go in new strength when the storm has passed and the sea is calm again. Amen.

STILLING THE TEMPEST

He was a red headed boy and there were countless freckles upon his face. To say that he was shy would be to put it very mildly. But he had to go to the new school for the first time and now the morning had arrived. There he stood, alone and feeling like a misplaced lump of awkwardness. No one knew him, except as the new scholar, and he knew no one except that these strange faces belonged to the pupils of what was his new school. They looked at him as he stood by the door, first upon one foot and then upon the other. Groups of boys stood around grinning, and a few girls walked by, giggling. Surely it was a terrible ordeal for a new boy, red headed and freckled, and he was almost ready to run back home in tears. But then, tears were not for him. There was a lump in his throat, and something that was beginning to boil way down deep in his breast.

Just then Eleanor went by, with her hair combed back as smooth as a raven's wing, and just as black. Eleanor had snapping eyes, and she had seen herself in the glass that very morning. Everybody said that Eleanor would change when she grew up. Her

tongue resembled a sharp pin. It could scratch and sting like a hornet. I wish I did not have to repeat what she said, but if I am to tell you this story I must relate it just as it happened. Eleanor walked all around the new boy and then shouted to her mates, "Oh girls, have you seen the sunset this morning?" Just like that. Some of the girls laughed and a few boys shouted. The eyes of the strange boy flashed fire.

Gilbert was noted for his bright remarks; at least he thought he was. What an opportunity was there to make a hit. So what do you suppose he did? I am sorry I must tell on Gilbert but he deserves it. When the laughter was over he strutted around, performing queer antics, like a stiff-legged lame man. Then he went close to the new scholar and shouted, "Oh boys, have you seen old Sorrel Top lately?" What a shout went up from some of the boys and girls. Gilbert limped and swaggered away. Down in the breast of the lonely boy there was a veritable tempest. How it dashed up into his brain, and even made the muscles of his arms grow tense.

One would think that enough had been done to any one new boy. But in every group at school there are likely to be a few who think of themselves as smart. They simply must let others know how very wonderful they are. So it was with Priscilla; "Pris" they all called her. What did Priscilla

do? It hardly seems possible that a girl could do such a thing. Had you seen her at home, always saying, "Yes, ma'am," and "If you please" and "I beg your pardon," as she went quietly around the house, you never would have suspected her of it. Indeed, her father and mother thought of her, always, as "Proper Priscilla." I am sure she will outgrow it, so I have not told her mother. This is what she did. (I wish I did not have to tell you.) She put her hands upon her hips, stuck her fingers out, turned her head to one side, and tripped lightly up to the boy, (Think of it!) looked at him for a moment with her tongue sticking out her cheek. Then as she danced away, she called, "Oh girls, now we shall not need a lamp on rainy days." (Some day I am sure Priscilla will be ashamed of what she said that morning.)

The boy? Well, his eyes were flashing and wet. A cyclone was in his breast and his fists were shut tight. But of course he could not fight a girl. What could he do?

Reginald was a two-faced boy. When the teacher was around he was as good as a baby doll. But when the teacher had gone home, or before she arrived in the morning, he was something else. This morning the teacher had not come and Reggie was, well, to put it mildly, he was a very unwise lad. He little dreamed of the tempest that was raging

in the new boy's breast, and he knew nothing of the muscles in that sturdy pair of arms. Had he known, he would have run out behind the schoolhouse and kept out of sight. Boys like Reginald always are like that. But not knowing, this is what he did. After walking towards the new boy, he stood still and made motions with his finger as though he were counting. Then he walked away and shouted, "Boys, I'll bet you there are more freckles on the left side of his nose than there are on the right side." How some of them shouted.

But this was too much. The tempest broke, and dashed itself all through the body of the new boy. It shouted, even as winds shout. "Show them that you are no baby. Give them your fists in the eyes and on their chins." He was just going to start after his latest tormentor, when something happened. A light-haired girl with blue eyes and a laughing voice came bounding up, and this is what she said; "Oh, I know who you are. You are Joe Wilder. My father met your father last night and he told me how you have just come from South Dakota, and that you are to go to our school. Father said you had a wonderful pony of your very own and that out West you used to ride wild horses. Oh come and tell us about it. Boys and girls, come here. This is Joe Wilder, who can ride a wild horse."

Well, he could not fight when a girl like that was talking to him. And besides, he could ride wild horses, and he would bet there was not a boy in all the school who could stay on the back of one for half a minute. Then her eyes were blue and her hand was upon his arm as she drew him into the midst of her friends. Of course, any boy who was really brave would *postpone* a fight when such a girl was talking.

Had you walked to school that morning with the teacher, this is what you would have seen: a group of boys and girls talking with a red-headed boy who had freckles on both sides of his nose. They were asking him questions and he was telling them slowly about the great wide plains and the horses that had to be tamed. The tempest in his own breast was stilled. Isn't it strange what a pair of blue eyes and a friendly voice can do?

THE ANGEL AND THE BASKET

TOMMY had freckles on his face. Often it was hard to see the freckles because of the smudge that would be there. It was all mother could do to get him to wash his face, and then the act would be accomplished amidst shouts and often tears. I dislike to tell you, but Tommy was what would be called a cross boy. There were times when he was actually selfish. He refused to help his mother and he was even angry when he had to say his prayers. The worst of it was that all these things didn't seem to trouble him in the least. What, oh what ever was to be done about it?

One night in particular he went to bed in a terrible temper. It took him longer to go to sleep than usual but at last his eyes were heavy and soon he was floating away into the land of dreams. No sooner was he there than his eyes were attracted to a moving figure. Isn't it strange what happens in our dreams? Tommy seemed to be high above his home. He could look down upon the yard and the field back of his home. The road in front was empty of automobiles and the garden walks were like beautiful paths among flowers.

As Tommy's eyes followed this moving shape he discovered that it was an angel. Queer that he should know an angel as he never had seen one before, but there was no doubt about it in his mind. The angel carried a basket on his arm and his face was wreathed in smiles. Hurrying to and fro, here and there, the angel seemed to be picking up things, looking at them for a moment and then throwing them away. Whatever could they be? Out into the field the angel went, exactly where Tommy had been playing that day. Then from the field he hurried to the basement, across the lawn and to Aunt Emma's house down the street. All the while the angel kept picking up things, looking at them for a moment and throwing them away again. The more he threw away the more the happiness passed from his face.

At last Tommy's curiosity got the better of him. When he saw the angel coming back from Aunt Emma's house he ran to meet him on the lawn. "What in the world are you doing all around my home with your basket and your queer actions?"

"Oh, is that you, Tommy?" came the reply. "Don't you know what I am doing? Why, I am the angel who gathers at night good deeds that are done by people in the daytime. I usually carry them home in this basket. I have followed in your

footsteps for a long, long time and what shall I say to the Keeper at the door when I return? I know He will be disappointed."

With that Tommy became a bit worried. "Have you found many of my good deeds?"

"I have found many deeds, but on looking at them I discovered only one that I could take back with me. The rest I have had to throw away."

At that Tommy looked into the basket on the angel's arm and saw one lone deed. He had visited an old lady across the way and carried her some flowers.

"Goodbye," the angel said. "I must follow the steps of another boy."

"Oh!" cried Tommy. "Is that all you have to carry back for me?"

"That's all I could find." The happiness had gone from the angel's face and the basket swayed upon his arm.

Just as he passed out of the gate Tommy shouted, "Will you be back again tomorrow night?"

"Yes, and every night after that."

As Tommy made his way up the garden walk again he pulled two weeds from the bed of asters and tied up a branch of the grapevine that was swinging loose under the arbor.

THE ANGEL OF GLADNESS

THE other day I had a long walk with a good friend. It had been some years since we had seen each other and during that time he had grown wise in ways that were new to me. All the time he was saying strange things and chuckling at my dullness in not knowing the meaning of his words. His laughter was of that happy kind that made me laugh with him, even though I did not always know why. I was so anxious to learn the secret of his happiness.

Just after we had passed the library we met four girls on their way home from school. They were merry and full of fun. Their laughter came to us and, as they passed, the sound of their voices was full of a wonderful music.

"My, but what a happy five they are!" my friend said.

"You mean four," I replied.

"No, five," he stated firmly.

I turned and counted them again. So did he. Once more we disagreed. So I took pains and pointed them out to him, one by one. "You see the girl with the white sweater?" I said. "That makes one. Then the girl with the brown coat. That

makes two. Beside her is the girl with the blue hat. Two and one are three. On the inside of the walk, the girl with the coat on her arm. That makes four. Now where are your five?"

This is what my friend replied. "Oh, but you are blind. Of course there are four girls, and the other one."

"What other one?" I said.

"Why, the one who always goes with happy girls, and with care-free men, too."

"Who is that?"

"Who else but the Angel of Gladness?"

"The Angel of Gladness." I never had thought of him.

A peal of laughter came from a group of boys across the street and the smile on my friend's face made me know that the angel was present in other places, as well. So whenever I see two boys, or three or four men, or a company of people at a party, I always say, "I hope the Angel of Gladness is there."

When you walk with your friend, are there two of you, or are there three? As you go away in the morning to school, are you alone, or are there two of you? At night when you go home, does mother welcome you, and another? The Angel of Gladness always will come if you call to him, even ever so gently.

WHERE HAS THE DAY GONE?

All day long the boy had played upon the lawn. Even at times he had strayed across the street and climbed the steps to his friend's home. His dog had followed him about and, except for a thorn upon a bush in the garden, there had been nothing to drive the happiness from his face. And now his supper was over and he was ready for bed, in his mother's lap, out on the western veranda. How snug and happy he was, as he watched the sky and his mother's face. It was a time when the boy talked on as he wished, and the mother listened and sometimes guided the thoughts of her son.

Soon all was quiet. A far away look crossed the face of the boy. His eyes grew big and his lips moved as he watched the few fleecy clouds that were clinging like sprays of gold just above the horizon. Then he looked into his mother's eyes and asked the age-old question; "Mother, where has the day gone?"

The mother had asked that same question of her mother when she was a girl. And now her boy was asking her to tell the answer. Did she know? If she did, could she make him understand? She must try,

and now was the time above all others, when he was young and he had asked the question. But oh, the wonder of it! Well did she know that her boy must find an answer for himself, or else be unsatisfied with the answer of another.

Then an angel entered the mother's heart and put wisdom upon her lips. "Tell me, dear, where do you think the day has gone?"

The boy looked at the rugged skyline, now shadowy and dull crimson, and said, "I think the day must have gone over the hills, Mother."

Here was an answer that was natural enough, and it seemed to satisfy the boy. But the mother wanted her son to say more, because knowledge often follows in the wake of words. So she led him on by saying, "Yes, the day has gone over the hills. Far away even now the sun is shining upon homes like ours. Little boys are playing upon beautiful lawns and men are working in the fields. The day has gone to them, even as it came to us, to get them out of bed and to give them light. Everybody everywhere waits for the day and it would be selfish for us to keep it. But where else do you think the day has gone? Think, dear, and tell me your thoughts."

And so the boy thought long, long thoughts. Soon he remembered a day when they had visited the shore of an ocean, far across the land. He never

could forget the soft sand and the wonderful lights upon the water as it came in over his feet and even up to his knees. When the sun set it was like a ball of gold sinking into a golden sea. So he said, "The day has gone out to the sea, Mother."

Again the heart of the mother was not satisfied. But how could she tell him and make him understand? Insight into what life means never comes from the lips of others. And so again she was patiently wise as she replied, "Yes, the day has gone out upon that distant sea. There are fisher folk out there who must wait for the day before they can haul their nets. Children with their parents are sleeping in white beds on great ships and they are waiting for the day. And once, when you were only a dream to us, your father and I sailed to a wonderful island in that sea. They have waited for the day, even there. But where else could the day have gone?"

She held her boy close and waited for his answer. Would he ask to go to bed and forget it all, or would he follow the leading of her heart and go along the way she walked before him? His eyes grew strange with wonder. Then he remembered how he had gone with his friends to a great stone church and a sweet-faced lady had told them the same story his own mother had told him many times, when they were alone together. So he said,

"The day must have gone back to God, Mother."

The soul of the one who watched and waited was not content. Somehow, to say the word God is very easy, but to understand where and how is very hard. One often leaves all things there and thinks the questions answered. She led him on and said, "How true, my dear. God gave us the day, fresh and new, and now He takes it back again, with all its hours of play and even with its thorns and tears. How could He give us another tomorrow unless He took today back to Himself? But is this all? What does it mean to go back to God? Has the day gone nowhere else? Think with me; perhaps we can find the better answer together."

The boy was perplexed. His eyes searched the eyes of his mother. Down deep he knew he did not understand and yet he wanted to know the answer to his question. The mother must help him now, for perhaps it would be a long time before he would ask her again and she could have him alone in the twilight.

Then she asked him to talk to her and tell her what he had been doing all that day. So he remembered and told her. In the morning he had had breakfast with Father and Mother, and laughed at Father when he tumbled him about the living room. And then he had helped his mother cut the roses for the lady who was old and ill. How could

he forget the thorn? His dog had brought him back a stick, over and over again, as he threw it over the fence and even into the fountain. Luncheon they had eaten together. His nap had been a short one because his best friend was coming to play with him. Then for dinner Father came and again they laughed as he told them stories about a man he had known when he was a boy. After dinner his father had squeezed him hard, carried him upon his shoulders to the car, and kissed him good night. They waved their hands to each other as he drove through the gate. And now he was ready for bed.

The mother knew her time had come. So she looked into his eyes and said, "Think hard, dear son, for now you know where the day has gone."

Again his eyes grew big and the light within them never was on land or sea. He looked away to the west and saw the last faint glimmering of crimson that told him where the day had been. In the sky there was one lone star shining far above the treetops on a hill. His mother's eyes were to him more wonderful than the star. For had she not come to understand that her boy had found the answer to his question? Even though his lips could not say the words that told her so, he knew where the day had gone. It was forever safe within the keeping of his own heart.

TO THE SUMMERLAND

WHEN I was a small boy my father called me into our yard late one crisp October afternoon. Pointing into the sky towards the north, he said, "Do you see something moving?"

Yes, I saw a moving object. As it came nearer it broke up into several objects. They all approached in perfect formation as though they were fastened together by unseen rods. Soon I saw that they formed a V shape and were headed for the river. As they came nearer they passed over our heads, and then I heard a wild call as they moved on towards the south.

"What are they, Father?" I asked with much wonder in my mind.

"They are wild geese."

"Where did they come from?"

"The North Country."

"Where are they going?"

"To the Summerland."

"How can they find it?"

"They will follow the river."

"But the river ends in the Sound and it will be winter there very soon."

"Yes, but they will fly still farther on towards the south until they find the summer sunshine and the warm waters."

"How will they know which direction to take?"

"They always know. Wild geese never make mistakes when they seek the Summerland."

"Can they see where they are going because they are so high in the sky?"

"No, they can not see far enough to be sure which way to go."

"Then perhaps the winds blow warmer from the south and they fly into the warmer winds?"

"No, there will be but one wind blowing and that may be from the north as it is tonight, and often very cold."

The wild geese, in their V shape flight and with their wild honking cries, were passing out of sight far down the river valley. But in my mind was the question "How?". So I pressed my father for an answer, and he was as eager to tell me as I was to hear his reply. But how could a man satisfy a boy when the wisest of the earth stand in wonder before the wild geese flying to the Summerland?

"We will talk about it after supper and before you go to bed," my father said.

"Will there be any more wild geese going south tonight?" I asked.

"There may be, as this is the time of year when

they leave the north and fly to a warmer climate. Often you can hear them flying in the night."

"Do they ever get lost in the night?"

"No, they never get lost, even though it be very dark. But after supper, boy, we will talk about them again."

So he left me alone in the yard while he finished his work for the night. The wild geese had long since passed out of our valley and no others came into view from the north. But on the fringe of my mind they were flying, flying towards a land of flowers. How did they know the direction? Why were they never lost?

During supper my father told me how he had seen wild geese every fall ever since he could remember, as they winged their way towards the south. It always made him a bit sad, because he knew that in our northern home the summer was ended. But when spring came the same geese would take to wing again, leaving the heat of tropic lands behind them for the cool waters and shady reaches of the great marshes of the north. Then his heart would be glad, for he knew that summer would soon come.

So the geese could fly north as well as south, for many, many miles, and never lose their way. The marvel of it made a deep impression upon me.

Before I went to bed my father told me about

one of the most wonderful things in the world.

"No one knows all about wild geese and their flight to the Summerland. They always want to live in a climate that is warm and beautiful. So let us picture one of the flock we saw tonight as he swims near the shore among the tall grass in a lake far to the north. All through the summer he will fly from lake to lake and then to river. But along towards fall he will become restless. The short days and the cold winds will make him want longer days and warmer winds. Soon the flowers will fade along the shores of the lakes and the leaves will turn crimson and then fall from the trees. Summer will be past and winter just over the hill. Perhaps a few snowflakes will fall upon the water close to where the goose is swimming and the sky will be gray. What do you suppose will happen then?"

For the life of me I did not know. This is what my father told me as I sat upon his knees that October evening so many years ago.

"Deep down in the breast of the wild goose there will be a voice that whispers, 'Winter is coming; fly to the Summerland. Winter is coming; fly to the Summerland.' "

"Could I hear the voice if I were there?" I asked.

"No, and neither does the goose hear it with his ears. But he hears it, and he knows it is time to

go. So he takes to wing, and no sooner is he in the air than others follow him and away they go, straight towards sunshine and warm winds and flowers."

"The voice may tell him it is time to go, but does the voice tell him the direction, too?" I asked.

"No, probably not," my father said. "Here is where the wild geese can teach us all a lesson. They know that if they obey the voice that says, 'It is time to go,' and beat their wings, the rest will take care of itself. If they rise into the air when the snowflakes fall, and fly straight away, they will head into the south. Something within them keeps their faces towards the Summerland. If they fly long and hard enough, they will arrive. This they know, and so they go without fear. After many days they feel the warm breezes and catch sight of sails on summer lakes."

This is the lesson I learned on the night I first saw the wild geese flying south: "And you, too, my boy, have a voice like that."

"I!" I exclaimed. "I never heard a voice say to me, 'Fly to the Summerland.' "

"No, but did you ever feel, 'I must not take that dime from Mother's purse because it does not belong to me'?"

"Yes, only the other day I wanted some candy

and Mother's purse was upon the table. But I did not take a dime."

"Of course you did not. Did you ever feel, 'I must go home now because Father expects me'?"

"Yes, just this afternoon I wanted to stay at Irving's house and help him mend his bicycle."

"That is what I mean; it was the voice that brought you home. May the time never come when you fail to hear it, and obey."

I can hear his voice now, as it comes to me out of the crisp October weather.

"My son, boys are like wild geese seeking the Summerland. They hear the voice that says, 'Now is the time to go; rise and fly.' Geese obey the voice and so we saw them passing over our home tonight. Boys hear the voice and often take no heed to what it says. Then they find themselves living in a land of winter. Whenever you are tempted to do a thing that is wrong, remember the wild geese flying down our valley. Obey the voice in your breast and when you take to wing you will be headed for the land of flowers."

With that I went to bed. Long after the lights were out I could hear the fall wind calling through our trees. I listened, but heard no sound of flying geese. In my mind, even until I was asleep, I could see the V shape headed south, and hear the wild call coming down to me out of the evening sky.

Now I am a man. My father has left our valley and gone where skies are blue and the lakes are dotted with summer sails. Across all the years I hear his voice call to me, "To the Summerland, my boy. To the Summerland."

WHO IS GREAT?

It had been a hard day and I had searched in many books to find the answer to an old question. After supper I continued my quest, hoping that somewhere between the covers of an ancient volume I might find what some wise man had said that would put my heart at peace. The search was unsuccessful and as I placed a new log upon the fire I wondered what I should do next.

How warm the room was and how softly the great chair fitted around my tired body. I let my head rest back upon the pillow that someone had placed for me and I had not even taken notice who that someone might have been. It wasn't long before the room began to dance in many colors and then I danced with them. After a bit of fantastic movement that ranged from the fire to the ceiling, I settled myself in the chair again to rest after such foolishness. Everything was still, when all of a sudden I heard a small voice. It seemed to rise and fall something as water rises and falls when the wind blows across it. A bit surprised, I listened for a moment, and this is what I heard.

"You all are mistaken. Of course I am most im-

portant. What did they build a fireplace for if not to have the flame flicker and the warmth of me go out into the room? Can you imagine them building a fireplace without a flame? What nonsense you all talk! Because of me little children come and sit in the glow with their books and the man comes to me when he is weary with searching for the answer to an old question. Of course I am the most important of you all."

The flame had been talking to someone and no sooner was it silent than I seemed to hear a murmur of different voices. Slowly there rose above the others another kind of voice that was steady and calm, like some great tree at sunset. This is what it said.

"Foolish flame. Where do you think you come from? What would you be if it were not for me? Do I not make you possible? Could you be at all if it were not for me? The chopper with his axe goes into the forests and cuts me down and saws me into small logs, and then piles me in long tiers to dry. Here I am helping to bring cheer and warmth into the room where the man looks for the answers to his questions among the books. Am not I, the wood, more important than you, the flame? Your own mind tells you that."

That had never happened to me before and yet I was much interested to know that wood and

flame could talk. No sooner was the wood silent than I heard other voices. And the one I detected most was rugged and a bit rough. Surely it represented a mind that knew what it thought.

"How foolish you two are! The flame is all right, of course, and the wood as far as it goes. But who ever heard of a fireplace without brick? With me they make the chimney tall and the fireplace wide. Without me there could not be a fireplace at all. What would wood and flame amount to if there were no fireplace to control you? With me men may build their fires out of wood and let little children play near the flame. You two are right enough in your way but before you talk any more pause for a moment and think of me and how necessary I am that you may be here at all."

I remember that seemed to me to be a fine argument and I was about to decide in my mind which was most important when I heard another voice, tiny and small. It seemed to come from the mantelpiece above my head.

"Pooh! Pooh! my good fellows. You make me laugh. Would there be any use of a fireplace, or could the wood be made into a flame were it not for me? You all could be ready for the fire but unless I came you would be as useless as can be. Here I am in the little box on the shelf, and only a match, you say. But a match starts the fire that warms the

room and makes merry that the man may search in his books for the answer to an old question."

As the match concluded its talk I was about ready to say something myself when I heard another voice, near and yet far away. While it spoke I had to listen.

"Oh, why do you argue so, you foolish ones? How could any of you get on without the others? Each is necessary to the other and only as each does his best in his place can the fire burn at all upon the hearth. My advice to you all is to do your best where you are and with what you are, and let the rest take care of itself. In God's world each of us needs the other, and only as we work together can there be a fire upon the hearth or joy in the heart of a man."

I was anxious to know what more this voice would say, when all of a sudden I was startled by the call of a friend from outside my door. Before I let him in I resolved I would not look for the answer to my old question in a book. I had found it in a moment's rest before the fire.

WINNING THE LOST GAME

To help win the game is glory for every boy. How the soul sings when the last man is out and the score favors "my team"! One's back may ache, but what of that? There may be bruises all over one's body, but they do not matter. The game is over and victory is beyond escape. What a shout goes up in the cheer for the losing team! Oh the thrill of walking by the eager spectators who cheered "us" on and sang "us" "to fight and win." Then there come the long evenings when the game can be played all over, again and again, before the fire or after the lights are out.

But not all games are won by "our" team. It is good for us and the game that one side does not win all the time. As boys grow older they learn that victory is all the sweeter after a season of defeat. And then there is a way to win a game that is lost. Indeed, to help win that way is to be a champion of the front ranks. Let me tell you how a boy I know helped win a game that was lost.

For weeks that spring the entire team had been getting ready to play the big game. The boys had practiced hard and their friends had come around to cheer them on. Everybody said, "If Ted pitches

we are sure to win." The boys all believed this, and Ted himself did not doubt it in the least. Of course they would win. Did they not have their favorite pitcher back, and were they not determined to keep the cup?

At last the great day dawned, and with it came sunshine, great crowds and high hopes. When the umpire shouted, "Play ball," you could feel the tingle in the very air.

The big game did not go as everybody had thought it would. The other team also had practiced every day for weeks. True, they did not have as good a pitcher, but this made everybody else work all the harder. As the game went on good teamwork began to tell. Ted pitched with all his might, but things did not go right. When the game was over the score was 3 to 4 and the home team had lost. What a group of crestfallen boys! Ted had hard work not to burst into tears. But like royal fellows they all shouted at the top of their lungs when they gave the victors their favorite yell.

Could a lost game be forgotten by everybody, both players and watchers, it would end there. But such is not the case. Memory will have her way and often she is a sulky old lady.

When Ted walked home he was not in a happy frame of mind. His chum shouted to him, "What

was the matter, old top?" One of his teachers (there were only a few such at school, thank goodness!) called to him and said, "Now that the game is over, Ted, I hope you will put more time on your language lessons." Had she known the words that burned upon his lips, ready to flame out at her, she never would have thought that he needed any lessons in language. A girl who sat opposite him in history class, and who always had her lessons, saw him coming. He never did care much for her anyhow, and so he slowed up a bit, but it did not do any good. Her voice always did sound as shrill as the factory whistle to him, but today it was even worse than that. "Oh Teddy boy, come on over with us girls and let us teach you how to pitch." (That girl grew up to be a homely and cross old maid.) Of course, no gentleman could talk back to girls so he threw his glove up in the air and caught it and walked on without saying a word. He never told me what he did think. The substitute pitcher called to him, "Some pitcher, I'll say."

Ted was bitter. Not only had he been beaten, but the stings of his mates were worse than defeat. Having taken no part in the game they felt called upon to spit out their spite upon the ones who had played and lost. No one knows how matters might have ended if the best player of all had not come along just then.

Everett had a lame back and he always had to wear a plaster cast in order to be able to walk at all. Of course, he could not play ball or even run, but all the boys were fond of him. They would wait for him on their way to school and they always called him "Old Scout." This meant that he was a good scholar and all that, and, well, let anybody try to take advantage of him and see what it meant.

Everett saw Ted coming and waited for him. Ted hurried up and as they started on together Ted's arm was over the hard plaster cast around Everett's shoulders. Here is where Everett played a fine game and won it after it was lost.

"Say, Ted, old boy, guess it wasn't your turn to win today, but you surely did pitch a great game. You know I shouted myself hoarse. In the last three innings you pitched like a big leaguer. But I was proud of you. Did you hear us singing?"

Yes, now that Everett mentioned it Ted did remember how they sang. He was feeling better already. He walked with Everett to his gate, and shouted, "So long, old scout; guess I'll come over and see you after supper."

His father waited for Ted, a bit anxious, wondering how he would take his defeat. He was glad when he heard him coming up the walk whistling. Everett had helped him win the greater game.

THE THREE FOOLISH MEN

EVERY boy knows the story of the three wise men, and every girl can tell me what they brought to the Babe in the manger. But I wonder if you ever have heard of the three foolish men?

Long ago in the days when men walked from town to town with staffs in their hands, there lived in a little village not far from a great forest four good friends. They had grown up together in the village and played hare and hounds through many a long afternoon upon the sunny slopes of the pasture lands. When winter had come and the snow was deep they had played fox and geese upon the smooth white surface of the river. To say that they loved one another would be to tell what always happens when boys are young and they share their games together.

But always and everywhere something else happens to boys at play. One day glides into another until the weeks make the months and the months pile up into years, and boys are no longer boys at play upon the hills but men at work in the fields. And so it came to pass with these four boys. Instead of wading through the summer streams bare-

footed, they now crossed on the great logs that had been worn smooth with the tramp of thick, hard soles. Their faces, still tanned with the sun and wind of the long days at work out of doors, were covered with beards that seemed to say to everyone they met, "We are no longer children, but men."

One night in spring, when the hard day's work in the fields was over, they met for a talk together. Long had they dreamed of the time to come when they could leave the village where their fathers always had lived and find for themselves what was beyond the forests and the blue mountains that seemed so near when the air was clear at sunset. Often had they said, "When we are free, we will go." And now they were free, as the time had come when the laws of the land called them men.

Just before they parted to go to their homes Johann said, "Boys, I, too, want to go with you, but I can not leave home now. My father and mother need me. My brother is ill and I must help build them a home that is warm and stout before I can leave them behind. My heart will follow you wherever you go, but I must stay here in the village until they need me no longer."

Whereupon Michael replied, "Well, Johann, we think you are foolish. Why stay here as your father did, when to go means the wonders of the world

we are going to see? And besides, if you go, you soon can earn money enough to build a wonderful home and then you can send for your father and mother to come. That is what we are going to do. I, too, love my parents and I go to build them a home that will bring joy to them when they are old. Do you remember the traveller who told us of the wonderful wood that grew in the forests beyond? I shall find the forests and out of them build a home that will be as beautiful as my dream has been. You will see, when you are old, that you made a mistake in not going with us tomorrow."

Then Theodore spoke up and said, "Johann, listen to me. Do you remember my uncle who came to visit us when we were boys? Well, I never have forgotten what he told me then. Away on the edge of the city where he lived there was a wonderful kiln where they baked brick. When the fires were dead and the bricks were taken from the hot piles and cooled in the air, they slowly turned to a color that looked like gold. Long have I dreamed of a home made of brick like that. Have you noticed how dull and gray the stones upon the hillsides are? Have you ever seen a home made of brick that resembled gold? Come with us and we will grow rich together."

Johann was very still under the stars and so Rufus told him of his hope as he planned to go upon

his way tomorrow. "Johann, why are you so stubborn? Do you remember the history book we studied at school? I never shall forget the pictures of the marble palaces that men had builded for the ones they loved. In one country far away there is a quarry where the marble is yellow and bronze. It looks warm in the sunshine and is beautiful beyond my power to tell. Tomorrow I go to find that quarry and I am determined that I shall send for my mother some day, to come to live with me in a home that will far surpass the beauty of anything that ever can be builded here among these little hills. Come with us, Johann, and we four shall grow rich and make the village proud that once we lived here as boys."

In Johann's eyes there was a shining light and in his heart there was a great hunger. But he remembered, and he could not go. So they shook hands, and were still for a moment before each went his separate way. Three were to meet at sunrise on the morrow and each was to bring a pack and a staff for a long journey. One was to remain in the village, thinking of his friends and his own lonely days.

If you had been in the village you would have seen Johann as day after day he went to the forests and cut down the great trees and hewed them into square long beams. The music of his axe could be

heard early and late and often he sang snatches of songs that he had learned in the village school. But this would make him sad, as he remembered who had stood beside him when he had sung them in other times. So the days fled on and soon a new home was standing just back from a quiet village street on a knoll that overlooked the river. Often at sunset the distant mountains would seem to come close and for a time almost smile at him. But Johann was tired when evening came and his thoughts would follow his three friends as they journeyed to distant countries and found gold and fame.

So the autumn came and the yellow leaves fell, and the winter wind blew against the new home that was stout and warm. The violets grew by the brooksides again and then the shouts of the children could be heard as they followed their fathers in the wide hayfields back of the village. A long procession of years followed each other out of the valley. Laughing children grew to be men who had children of their own to run to meet them when they returned home from the day's work. The river still sang on between its banks and the forests were thinned as men went for lumber and wood.

Johann, too, had changed with the years. He had built another house and brought a brown-eyed girl to help him make it a home for them and their

children. Now, grandchildren played around his door and his own parents were sleeping with their fathers in the yard just back of the village church. Time had been kind to Johann because he had used time to make those who loved him happy. But often, after sunset, he would remember his three friends and their last evening together.

One day a wonderful thing happened. The three friends returned from their wanderings. Upon the streets they met only strangers who passed them by. Children would look at them and smile, and older ones would ask, "Who are they, and why do they seem to be lost in our small village?"

Little did they know of the hidden memories in the breasts of the three old men. Their first inquiry was for Johann. Yes, he lived just up the street. They found him, gray but erect and strong, in the garden helping his son dig up a rosebush to be planted in his own new garden just across the street. They did not know each other at first. Then a light broke in all their eyes as they called each other by name. How the years fled away until they were children again, playing on the hills and coming late to school. Johann wanted them to come and sit upon his veranda and tell him of their journeys and their wealth. After that they could stay with him as long as they wished and rest from their journeys. But they must hasten on and could

stay just long enough for a glass of milk and some bread. Johann asked them many questions and this was what they said.

Michael spoke first, and as he told his story Johann noticed that his clothes were old and that he was bent with walking. "The years have grown heavy upon me as I have searched for the forest of beautiful wood. Often have I been told of wonderful oaks and stately mahoganies that were growing in forests far away. But after I had made the weary miles I found them to be no more beautiful than the trees that were growing where we played as boys. So I travelled from land to land, always to be disappointed at the end of the journey. But only a short time ago I heard of a lumber camp on the far side of the forest here at home. The wood was of wonderful grain and there was plenty for all my needs. So I must hasten on to see if what they say be true."

Then Theodore told his story. As he talked Johann saw that his hand trembled and his voice was thin and shrill. "When I started out upon that morning so long ago I went straight to the city where my uncle lived. I found him, but when we sought the place where they made the golden brick we saw cattle eating grass near a great hole in a clay bank. A few piles of old and broken bricks were all that remained. But someone knew of a kiln

in a distant place where they made such brick, and on I went. After many days of travelling I arrived to find that the bricks were a dull red. So I have journeyed from place to place, determined to find the kiln with the golden colored brick. Once or twice I thought I had come to the end of my journey. Yet always has there been something lacking, and always have I gone on to find the kiln that I knew must be somewhere beyond. The other day I heard of a kiln where they made just the brick I wanted. When I looked upon the map I found that it was situated upon the bank of our own home river, just a few miles back in the clay meadowlands. I must go soon and so end my searchings."

When he had finished they ate their bread for a moment in silence before Rufus told his story. As he talked he coughed, and his cheeks were hollow and pink with fever. His voice had a foreign accent, for he had lived in distant lands. "The yellow marble I have not found. The old quarry of which I read in the history book had been worked until the marble all was gone. I saw a palace high upon a hill, that was like the one I had seen in my dreams. Then I was all the more determined to have one like it all my own. So I followed the advice of an old man who told me of a quarry of yellow marble far away in his own native land. After hardships

of many months I reached the quarry to be disappointed again. And so I have travelled, over lands and seas. Never have I found that which I set out to find, years and years ago. But now all will be well. Only the other day I heard of a new quarry, just opened on the farther side of the mountains at home. So here I am, on my way to the quarry with the yellow marble. I must be going, because I am old and there are not many years left for me to build my palace high upon a hill."

And so they turned their faces towards their journey's end. Johann bade them goodbye with sadness in his heart. Soon they were out upon the plain, following the road that led towards the mountains and the riches beyond. They talked but little as they walked together. The sound of their slow but measured footfalls was mingled with the thump, thump of their staffs.

Along towards sunset they stopped to rest, and each looked back toward the village. Far away they seemed to see Johann in his own yard, playing a game with children who shouted as they played. And oh, the wonder of it! Was it really so, or did the sun play a trick with them just before it passed from sight in a sky of crimson peace? One looked, and behind Johann beheld the home that was more beautiful than the one he had planned to build for his father and mother, all out of beautiful and

sweet scented wood. Another gazed, and saw a house that resembled a long-prayed-for home, made out of golden colored brick that had never been found. The third beheld a palace, more wonderful than the one he had known in a distant land, and shining with the soft light of yellow marble.

These three friends, pilgrims upon a journey that has no ending, turned and went upon their way again. As one walked he limped and leaned upon his staff. Another shaded his eyes with a trembling hand as he turned to look from time to time at a picture that was fading in the twilight. The third coughed as he drew his coat around him, and shivered when the evening breeze came softly down from the hills.

THE SOLDIER IN THE WOOD

THERE was great excitement at Jack's house whenever Uncle Fred came for a visit. Of course father and mother were delighted. But Jack was happy beyond words. Uncle Fred was the best pal a boy ever could wish for. Then he always brought Jack a gift that was a surprise and at the same time exactly what he wanted. Do you blame Jack for shouting with joy when he saw Uncle Fred coming up the walk? At such a time some might wonder if Uncle Fred really was old enough to be an uncle at all. But why should uncles be stiff and frumpy? I never could understand people who thought that as soon as you had a nephew you must be sedate and never run in races or climb trees.

One of the best things about Uncle Fred was this: Jack could share him with all his friends. You should have been along when he took them fishing over to Pickerel Pond. Many were the times they had climbed with him to the top of Baldwin Mountain and slept out of doors on the ground. Uncle Fred knew just how to arrange the hemlock boughs so the bed would be as "soft as feathers." To see him throw the pancakes high in the air and

catch them again in the frying pan, when he made breakfast for them over an open fire, was too funny for words. No boy ever refused to bring wood for him. In fact they all said, "I wish I had an uncle of my own, just like Uncle Fred."

Upon this visit in particular Uncle Fred was planning to have a good time with his young friends. No sooner had he arrived and dinner was over than he asked for all the boys. After they had greeted him and he had asked them what they had been doing since he had seen them last, he suggested that they go for a walk. Everybody was excited and anxious to go. He led them through the streets of the town and out to the top of a high hill in a great pasture. Here they all sat down around Uncle Fred. When they had rested a bit, he took a box out of his pocket. The interest was very keen. As he opened the box the boys saw a new four-bladed jackknife. Surely it was a beauty.

Everyone had a chance to examine it as Uncle Fred passed it around among the boys. They opened the blades, read the maker's name stamped into the blue steel, and tested its sharpness. Then they passed it back to Uncle Fred and waited to see what he would say. One never knew just what he might do next. Imagine their surprise when he handed them a piece of wood he had been carrying all the time. "Look that over, boys," he said, as it passed

from hand to hand. When it was returned he laid it on the ground in front of him, and placed the knife beside it.

"Boys, I want you to look at the knife and the piece of wood for one whole minute and never say a word. Then I want you to tell me what you see. A knife and a piece of wood are mere things; but when two bright eyes are added they may be much more. The one whose eyes are the keenest can have the knife for his own. Are you ready?" With that he took out his watch and said, "Begin now."

You should have seen the boys. Every eye was fixed upon the knife and the wood. They were so still that had their mothers seen them they would have been astonished. The minute seemed to be as long as ten minutes ought to be. But soon Uncle Fred spoke. "Time's up." With that he placed his hat over the knife and piece of wood. "Who will tell me now what he saw?"

The oldest boy in the group was Everett. He was anxious to speak first. "When I looked I saw a piece of wood and a knife. What else was there to see?"

Uncle Fred smiled. "Who's next?"

Maurice, who was noted for his bright sayings, said, "Why, when I looked at the knife and the

pieces of wood I saw a wonderful chance to whittle."

Everybody laughed and Uncle Fred smiled more broadly than before.

Jack spoke next. "When I looked at the jackknife and the piece of wood I saw an opportunity to make shavings for the fire when we cook our supper."

Uncle Fred's smile grew broader still. So several answers were given until there was only one boy left who had not spoken. "What did you see, James?"

James was the smallest of the boys, and the youngest. There was a dreamy expression in his eyes and some people said there were times when he was very forgetful. Often someone would speak to him and he would not hear them at all. His teacher used to say, "Are you gathering wool, James?" His eyes were very keen, however, when he did use them in earnest. His reply was most interesting.

"When I looked at the knife and the piece of wood I saw a soldier."

"A soldier!" they all exclaimed.

"Yes, a soldier. With the knife I could whittle away the wood until there would be a soldier in my hand."

When Uncle Fred spoke there was something in his voice that made them all listen. "James, the knife is yours. The boy who can look into the wood and see a soldier is a far-seeing boy."

Of course James was pleased. Some of the other boys were surprised and one or two could not understand at first. But they knew that Uncle Fred was very fair, so no one questioned his decision. After he had spoken to them again they began to see how very shortsighted they had been.

"Boys, how far can you see into the future? How are you going to shape your lives in the years that are ahead? Do you think you can make your dreams come true? It depends very largely upon you. The future is yours and you can whittle it into shape if you only will. Often you must think about it. Then I want you to remember the jack-knife and the soldier in the wood."

MINUS OR PLUS PEOPLE

I AM sure you all know what the minus sign is. The plus sign is one of the first things you learn when you begin to study at school. Did you ever think that there are minus and plus people? Minus, you know, means "take away," and so there are people who take away from everyone they meet. Plus, of course, means "add to," and there are folks who add to all the people they know. Are you acquainted with any such?

There was to be a picnic on the morrow. All the children were as happy as children could be when they knew that only one night was between them and the wonderful day. Several of them had gathered to talk about what they were going to do and the games they were to play. Oh, what plans they were making! How they would run and romp in the woods! What fun they would have playing hide and go seek out among the trees! When they were weary they would swing a bit and then "let the old cat die." Of course they talked about the lunch and the wonderful ride to the grove and back again after the lights were lit.

In the midst of their conversation who should

come but Harry. Harry was a minus person; you could tell by the look on his face. He listened to the conversation for a while and then exclaimed, "Oho, so you are going over to the old man Smith's orchard, are you? Do you know what sort of place that is? Poison ivy all around. The ground is rough and there are a lot of wet holes. I'd like to see you after you played tag a few minutes over in that place."

You should have seen the look on the children's faces. Something had been taken from them. Not satisfied with what he had done, Harry went on and said, "So you are going to ride over in a truck, are you? Supposing the thing breaks down. Only last week I know of a boy who went to a party in a truck and not only did the truck refuse to go but one of the boys got hurt."

The children's faces were getting longer and longer. Surely Harry was a cruel boy as he continued. "Have you seen the newspaper? Do you know it may rain tomorrow? What will you do out in old man Smith's grove when it rains? I am going to the pictures instead."

The children were almost ready to cry. Mildred had come up and heard most of what Harry said. How Mildred's eyes snapped! You could see from the looks of her face that she was a plus person. Listen to what she said. It will do you good.

"Look here, Harry Jones. What are you talking about? Father and I drove by Mr. Smith's grove only last night and it is just a beautiful place with a wonderful brook flowing down towards the river. And don't you worry one bit about the truck. It is my father's truck and it never broke down yet when he took people to a picnic."

You should have seen the look upon the children's faces. Surely Mildred was adding something to them very rapidly.

"Suppose it does rain. Mr. Smith has a large barn and it is the loveliest place to play games in you ever saw. Can you imagine any more fun than romping over the hay and playing hide and go seek in that barn with the rain pat, pattering on the roof?"

The children were about ready to shout with joy. Mildred had added to their happiness a hundredfold.

Do you know any men who are minus men? Are you a minus person or a plus person? Get an early start, boys and girls, and see to it that you always add to the lives of people and never take away from them anything that is worth while. I know a man who is a minus man and everybody sighs when they see him coming. He has a brother who is a plus man, and whenever he comes around the children run to meet him.

A LOST BOYHOOD

Dick was angry. For a long time he had planned to go to Bob's party. His father had just told him he could not go because he had disobeyed him that very afternoon. Plead as he might, his father would not change his mind. So there was nothing for him to do but to remain at home. He felt it necessary to sulk. When he went off to bed there was bitterness in his heart. True, he knew he had not obeyed his father, but that did not seem to make the matter easier. How eagerly he looked forward to the time when he would be a man. Then he would do exactly as he wanted to. There would be no father to tell him no. Wouldn't it be glorious to get up in the morning and know that all day long one could do exactly as he wished? Hurry the time when he would leave his boyhood behind him and act in ways that pleased him most.

Slowly sleep crept upon him, and then something happened. The angel who fixes things waved his magic wand, and, without Dick's knowing it, he was changed at once to a man. No sooner was the change wrought than Dick arose from bed. It was no easy thing to dress himself because his clothes did not seem to fit, and his shoulders hurt. That

was strange, because they fitted well enough when he took them off the night before, and there had been no pain in his back. The fact was, Dick had not discovered yet that he was a man.

Going quietly down the stairs and into the street, he heard a turmoil around the corner. Hurrying in that direction he saw his old pals. Waving his hand he called for them to wait for him. They gazed at him for a moment and then someone said, "Look at the old duffer. Beat it."

In astonishment Dick started to follow them, when whom should he meet but his school teacher, Miss Brown. Dick liked her well enough as teachers go, and he always felt it wise to be friendly with her. As he passed, he tipped his hat and said, "Good morning, Miss Brown." She looked at him, hurried by and said never a word. He began to dislike her from that moment.

Susan lived up the street only a little way. She was out jumping rope in front of her house when Dick passed, and he spoke to her in his most friendly manner. She stared at him for a moment, and then rushed into the house as fast as ever she could. This was rather startling as Susan had never done that before. His eyes followed her for a moment in wonder. Then he stuffed his hands in his pockets and exclaimed, "Women are queer, anyhow. I surely am off them for life."

Not far beyond Susan's house he saw a number of boys playing baseball on a vacant lot. When he was opposite them a high ball passed the catcher and rolled to his feet. He picked it up and threw it back again. My! but something was the matter. The ball wouldn't go straight and his arm hurt him terribly. The boys laughed. "Let them laugh. I'll not stop to bother with them."

Just then he heard the fire whistle. He counted the blasts. One, two, three,—pause; one, two. Thirty-two. Often had he passed that box on the way to school. It was not far away. Soon he saw the engine come tearing around the corner, with many boys shouting after it. What heart is not thrilled at the clang, clang, of the bell as the horses gallop down the street? He, too, joined in the mad race to follow, but his legs would not seem to go. His heart was beating rapidly against his ribs and he had to slow down to a walk. By the time he arrived the fire was all out and everybody was ready to go home.

"Was it much of a fire?" he asked one of the lads standing by.

The boy looked at him and said, "Not much. Where were you when the cyclone passed?" Dick became angry that anyone should talk to him like that.

In disappointment he glanced over his shoul-

der into a large plate glass window and saw the reflection of himself. My, oh my! How terrible it was! He had two chins, and there was a scraggly beard all over his face. His clothes did not fit him at all, and the top of his head was bald. Could it be possible? And yet only the night before he had wanted to be a man. Somehow in the middle of the night the thing had happened. Then he began to cry.

"What's the matter, old fellow?" called a policeman by his side.

"I want my boyhood back again," he cried. "I want my boyhood back again." At that the policeman put his arm on Dick's shoulder and he began to struggle with might and main against his unhappy fate. How he did struggle and sob.

A bright light broke across his eyes. Someone had his hand upon his shoulder. As he looked up, there was his father, and he was safe and a boy in his own bed at home.

"What are you shouting about, sonny?" his father asked.

"Oh, Dad, dear Dad," replied Dick. "I am so happy I am not a man, yet. I want to stay just as I am, and be your boy."

THE MASTER SALESMAN

Is there any boy here who has ever thought he would like to stand behind the counter and sell candy or toys to other people? Perhaps some of you girls have wished that you might sell lovely silks and satins to the mothers of other girls. I want to tell you about a master salesman whom I met not long ago. Life is for most of us, you know, the selling either of our goods to customers who will buy, or ourselves to some need in the world.

I was in a lovely town in the south where there were four great golf links leading away from the same club house. Whenever we went to play a twosome or a foursome we always were accompanied by colored "boys" who went as caddies. Not only did they carry our clubs and hunt for our lost balls but they would amuse us with their quaint sayings and their jolly laughing.

At one of the tees on the brow of a little hill I was greeted one day by a young colored boy, the son of a faithful caddy, who said, "Do you want to buy some golf balls?" He had four he had found in the woods and all were bruised from having been used and discolored from lying upon the wet ground.

"How much do you ask for your balls?" I said.

"A dollar."

It did not seem to me that the balls were worth a dollar but I did want to reward the little chap for his search. "I will give you fifty cents."

"A dollar," was his only reply.

The next day I found him at the same place with the same four golf balls. "I'll give you sixty cents," was my greeting.

"A dollar." His reply was accompanied by as merry a twinkle in the eyes as ever you could wish to see.

When I came to his particular tee on the very next day there he was, smiling and waiting for me. "Want to buy my golf balls?"

I looked them over again, smiled at him and said, "I'll give you seventy-five cents today."

"A dollar."

I wondered how many, many times he had said the same two words, as other players had made offers for his balls. And so it went for several days until at last I held the balls in my hand. "I will give you ninety-eight cents, and here's the cash." I held the coins before him and his eyes danced. He looked at the balls and then at the cash and then back to me again.

"A dollar." He was only a colored boy, but his pluck was that of a strong man.

I left him, admiring him greatly. "Tomorrow," I said to the other three of the foursome, "I will give him his dollar and ask him to caddy for me. He will be able to find my balls very quickly and it will do me good to carry my own clubs."

The next day he was not there. That night, while walking away from the links visiting with a friend, we passed the caddy house. A familiar voice called out to me, "I sold my golf balls."

"Hurrah! How much did you get?"

A light of victory came into his eyes as he exclaimed, "A dollar!"

MASTERING TROUBLE

Some people always run away from trouble. Others merely scold about it and never seem to do anything else. Once I knew a boy who would sit right down beside a hard problem in arithmetic and blame his teacher. The other day I heard about a girl who knew exactly what to do when old Trouble lifted his head near where she happened to be. She was so wise that I want to tell you what she did.

One of the favorite haunts of the children on spring and summer holidays was the old abandoned farm on the side of a hill. For some unknown cause the buildings had burned long before and of course this added an air of mystery to the place. The old cellar hole was half full of rubbish but there were rosebushes growing all around it. A great lilac tree grew near where the front door had been. The fragrance of the roses, mingled with the sweet smell of the lilacs, was enough to attract anyone who happened to be passing that way. Down by the spring there was a large plot of forget-me-nots that looked like bits of blue sky growing upon green stems. Honeysuckle planted by a hand long

gone had grown all over the wall. The great hill furnished a rugged background and the blue mountain in the distance with the river in the foreground made a never-to-be-forgotten view. Could there be a more wonderful place to spend an hour and to gather flowers?

To reach the old farm one had to leave the main boulevard and follow what once had been a winding carriage road between rows of maple trees. A fence had been built across the road at the edge of the field where the old dwelling once stood. The builders left only a narrow gap in the fence right by a great boulder. Of course, this was so no one could enter the field unless he be on foot, and then he had to open the gate that would swing to of itself. Who wants horses and carriages, or automobiles, or even straying cattle, to enter a field and tread down the grass?

A great boulder just inside the gate was one of the landmarks of the farm. In the old days children had played at housekeeping around it. In their games of war it had been a fortress, bristling with wooden cannon and defended by youthful soldiers. It was just the place to sit and rest and look at the river and the hills. One always was tempted to do this after he had wandered around and gathered flowers.

One sunny day in June three girls made their

way to this lovely place. Each went alone and each purposed in her heart to take an armful of flowers back to her mother.

Molly walked along by the edge of the boulevard and then turned into the old winding road. She took plenty of time, stopping now and then to look at the river as it disappeared between two hills. When she came to the gate she said to herself, "Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a cottage here!" Walking over by the old cellar hole she picked some roses and then broke a few lilac blossoms off the great old tree. As she walked along by the wall she gathered honeysuckle. On her way back to the gate she picked a handful of forget-me-nots. Collecting all the flowers in her arms she started for home. The great boulder lured her and she could not resist the temptation to rest for a minute and drink in the beauty and the cool air.

When Molly arose to go her ankle brushed against a great thistle that was growing close by the path. It hurt her and brought tears to her eyes. So keen was the pain that she thought something terrible must have happened to her. Throwing her flowers upon the ground she ran down the winding road towards the village as fast as ever she could. When she reached home she was out of breath, but her mother found her more frightened than hurt. After she had regained her breath she

thought, "How foolish I have been!" In her heart there was a disappointment because she did not have a single flower to give to her mother.

A little later Blanche came to gather flowers. She knew the field and all the lovely spots down by the wall and under a great elm tree. Often had she been there with her father when they had walked out into the country upon Sunday afternoons. But today she was alone. Her aunt was to be at her home for supper and mother had sent her to bring some blossoms for the supper table and the long table in the living room.

Blanche loved the lilacs best, and so she went to the old tree and gathered some of the largest blossoms. Roses were her aunt's favorite, so she picked many of the loveliest ones she could find and tied them into a beautiful cluster. "These I will give to Aunt Edith and tell her, 'Roses to the Queen,' " she thought. Her mother loved the forget-me-nots. She picked all she wanted of these blue beauties and tied them into little bunches saying, "I will put one of these by each place at the supper table." Then a lovely spray of honeysuckle was gathered for good measure. With all these flowers in her arms she walked to the old boulder to rest.

When she arose to go, her ankle brushed against the great thistle. It hurt her severely. Great tears came to her eyes. She pressed the flowers close to

her breast and ran towards home as fast as her feet could carry her. When she arrived her mother found that the thistle had scratched her slightly, but beyond that she was not injured at all.

At the supper table Blanche was sorrowful because the roses were crushed and the forget-me-nots were broken and drooping. Why should a thistle ruin all her flowers and part of the joy of bringing them home?

Alice came to the field that very same afternoon. She sang a song of happiness as she breathed the pure air and watched the clouds upon the mountains. Her mother was resting and she would surprise her by carrying home as beautiful a bouquet of flowers as she could gather. Her mind was free to wander as it would, and her heart was happy because she had finished her work before she left for her walk. The bees that were hovering above the roses were friendly to her and the smell of the lilacs made her want to sit down by the old tree and dream a long, long dream. There was a hummingbird flitting from honeysuckle to honeysuckle and she talked to the pretty little creature as she stood by the wall. The blue forget-me-nots as they looked so cool growing in the damp ground seemed to her to resemble the thoughts of her baby sister.

When her arms were full Alice went back to the great boulder to rest before she began her walk

towards home. How pleasant it was to be quiet and to look over her blossoms towards the village and the farms beyond. When she arose to go, her ankle brushed against the thistle and hurt her so that she cried aloud. Then she stopped and looked down at her ankle and saw the thistle. Forcing back the tears she gently placed her flowers on the grass beside the path. Then she went to the old wall and found a short and pointed stick. With this she dug the thistle out by the roots and left it beside the path to die in the sun.

When Alice reached home she placed all her flowers in her mother's lap and not a single one was crushed or broken.

THE OLD STONE PILE

Mr. Brown had purchased a parcel of ground that overlooked the lake. In all the countryside there was not to be found a location more beautiful. The lake was dotted with islands and the hills beyond were blue in the morning and golden in the sunset. Cool breezes blew across the lake in the hot summer days and white sails could be seen going here and there around the headlands and among the islands. What a wonderful place to spend a June day or to have a picnic!

"Here I will build a summer home for my family and myself," said Mr. Brown.

So the architect was asked to draw the plans and the carpenters were set to work. Before many weeks the house began to take shape and when the hot days of summer came the home was ready. You should have seen the look of happiness upon the face of Mr. Brown when he led Mrs. Brown and the children up the front steps and said, "Welcome home." Mrs. Brown was delighted. The children ran and raced through all the rooms and then out upon the veranda that faced the lake. "Oh, Papa,"

they exclaimed, "what fun we shall have exploring the field and the shore and swimming in the bay."

One would suppose that Mr. Brown ought to have been a happy man. Indeed he was, at first. But before the second day had passed he made a discovery. Just at the edge of the woods, on a little hill that overlooked the lake, there was an old stone pile. The men who cleared the field had piled it there, years before. He could see the stones from the corner of the veranda and from his sleeping room windows upstairs. For a few days they troubled him every time he looked at them. Then they vexed him. "Why had I not noticed them before I bought the parcel of ground?" he said. "One never would suppose that stones could be so ugly. They are a blemish upon the whole landscape."

Often he would talk with Mrs. Brown about the unsightly old pile. Then he would go and walk around it, and wish it was not there. Sometimes in the night he would lie awake and think of the thing upon his hillside that was like a horrid scar. When he arose in the morning he would go to the window and look towards the lake. There his eyes would rest upon the pile of stones and his spirit would be disturbed within him. It soon became a source of constant worry. He talked about it so much that Mrs. Brown went into another room

when she saw him coming. The children dreaded to have their father speak to them lest he might run on about the foolish men who cleared the field. It seemed as though he had forgotten the lake and the islands and the new home, and was spending all his waking hours worrying about a few dead stones. There were times when he talked in his sleep about them and upon many a day Mrs. Brown and the children saw him walking around them and looking at them with deep trouble in his eyes.

One day a happy idea came to Mr. Brown. He would have the old stone pile removed, and then he could have a few days of peace before the summer ended.

So he hired several men to carry them away and throw them into the woods. But the woods belonged to another man. When Mr. Brown asked the owner if he might throw the stones there he replied, "No. I am going to sell the woods to the man who owns the field beyond. He is to build a summer home for his oldest daughter and he will not want to be troubled with the stones among the trees."

Mr. Brown was disappointed, but he was not to be foiled. So he said, "I will have them hauled to the railroad and taken far away out of my sight." When he went to see the Station Master he found

that it would cost much money to have the stones hauled to the railroad and then sent upon freight cars to a deep ravine many miles back from the lake. This he could not afford to do, as he already had spent most of his spare money in building the new summer home. It seemed as though there were nothing else to be done.

For several days Mr. Brown was at his wits' end. He thought of nothing else except his disappointment. Then one morning at the breakfast table he exclaimed, "I will have them dumped into the lake." Mrs. Brown and the children knew what he meant. So after breakfast several men came and talked with him about hauling the stones to a large flat boat and then rowing them far out upon the lake, and throwing them into the water. He had money enough to do that. Now the matter was settled and he could enjoy the remaining days before it would be autumn.

It would seem as though misfortune was to be his constant companion. The authorities of the town said, "No, you can not dump your stones in the lake. If you do, others will want to throw their stones and rubbish there, and we shall have no end of trouble." Talk as he would, there was no changing their minds. He would pay them money, but they would not listen. They were only stones, but that did not alter the matter. He was paying

taxes in the town, but so were all the other men who lived beside the lake.

For the next few days Mr. Brown was in despair. Then he said, "I will sell the old place and leave the stone pile forever behind me."

Mrs. Brown thought, "Perhaps, if we go, he will forget the stones and we can have a little peace."

The children said among themselves, "Isn't it too bad that Papa can not forget the stones and look at the sunset across the lake?"

A few days later he had sold the new home to a stranger. Then he moved his family to another place far away. Mrs. Brown and the children often wished that they might sit upon the veranda and eat their supper as they watched the hills across the lake change from blue to gold.

When the next summer came Mr. Brown said to himself, "I will go back and have one more look at the old stone pile and rejoice that it is no longer upon a parcel of ground that belongs to me."

The man who had purchased the new home met him upon the veranda. After they had exchanged greetings Mr. Brown said, "Where is the old stone pile?"

"Look, there it is. Isn't it beautiful?"

Mr. Brown looked, and at first could not believe his eyes. He saw three lovely children about the age of his own, with their mother, following a

winding walk up the little hill. At the end of the path, and overlooking the lake, there was as beautiful a children's playhouse as one ever could wish to see, and built all out of stones.

WHAT'S THE USE?

Did any of you boys or girls ever say, "What's the use?" There are days when you want to play and you have to work around the house or in the yard. Then you say, perhaps, "What's the use?" To have to practice on the piano when one wants to sit in the shade and read makes many girls exclaim, "What's the use?" The other day I met a boy on the way to school and his face looked like a thunder cloud. "What's the matter, Bud?" I called to him. He was angry because he had to go to school and study drawing. "What's the use of all that foolish stuff?" I wonder if you all have not asked that question some time. There is an answer and I want you to find it in a story.

Once upon a time there were two boys who were good friends. They lived far over the sea in a beautiful village among the mountains. All their lives, ever since they could remember, they had been playmates. On long summer afternoons they would climb the high hills back of the village and look down from afar upon their cottage homes. When the days were dull and the clouds hung low and all was still in the forests, they would fish the trout streams and bring home their baskets full of fish.

Little did they know of the land beyond the ridges that shut in the valley where they lived. Sometimes travelers would visit the village and tell marvelous stories about the wonders of the lands beyond. Often a messenger from the Court would come and read to the inhabitants a message from the King. Everybody would stand bareheaded as the messenger in a bright uniform would read from an official looking document that was covered with many seals.

At times like that Philip would follow every word the messenger read. Matthew would watch the uniform and count the seals. After he had gone and Philip and Matthew were alone they would talk about the messenger and the message. "It must be wonderful to read," Philip would say.

"But I wish I had a uniform like the one he wore," Matthew would reply. So they would talk about the fine ladies and the brave men at the King's Court and picture the uniforms the soldiers wore.

"Do you suppose they all can read at the King's Court?" Philip would ask.

"No, not all of them," would be Matthew's guess.

"What would I not give to be able to read and to write!" Philip would exclaim after they had talked about many things.

"But why should we be able to do what our fathers can not do?" was all that Matthew would say.

One day a wonderful story was spread among the people of the village. A beautiful woman had come from a rich land beyond the seas to live among them. She had been sent, so the story ran, to be a teacher. It all seemed so strange to the boys. Why would strangers who had never seen the village and who did not know any of the people by name, care enough for them to send a teacher to teach them? Why would a lovely lady care to leave her home and her friends to teach strangers? Little did they know that there were many who loved a Friend who had told them to go and teach in all parts of the world.

A few days later word came to all the boys and girls that the lovely lady wanted to meet them on the village green. They went in their gala attire. What a pretty picture they made as she taught them new games and played with them while they ran to and fro across the grass. After the games she gathered them all together and gave them sweets and told them stories of the custom of the boys and girls in the land that was her home. Then she told them how she wanted to teach a school where all the children could learn to read and write. How many would like to learn how to read from books

and to write real letters? Would they put up their hands? Every hand went up. Matthew was delighted and Philip was so happy that he could hardly speak.

The next week the lady was ready to open her school. The fathers of the village had helped her make some rough benches and put them in a large room in an old warehouse not far from the river. She had scrubbed the floor and the windows with her own hands. After she had hung a few pictures on the walls and put some books on the shelves it was a clean and homey place when the morning sun came streaming in. The first morning brought as eager a group of boys and girls as one could wish to see. Were they not going to learn to read and to write like the King's messenger and the ladies at the King's Court?

Philip and Matthew were among the first to come and they remained after the others had gone. The teacher was so kind to them and her ways were so full of the wonder of a quiet grace that they loved her at the first. Then she was going to open new worlds to them as she unlocked the mysteries in the books upon her desk and standing upon the shelves. Some day Philip would write a letter to Matthew, and Matthew would read it and write an answer. Then Philip would open the answer with great dignity and read what Matthew had

written. Would it not be wonderful to do that?

"Perhaps one of us can be a messenger for the King," said Philip.

"Yes, and wear a beautiful uniform," replied Matthew.

They had not been many days at school when they made a discovery. To learn to read and to write was going to take many months and much hard work. The boys were disappointed. At first it had been great fun to learn about the sounds of the letters and the words that were simple and easy to spell. But after a time the words were more difficult and the rules were many and hard to learn. Would they ever be able to read as well as the King's messenger? Philip was willing to work hard and to do the best he could. Matthew became discouraged when he could not spell the words and his papers came back to him with many mistakes.

"What's the use of all this hard work?" said Matthew. "My father can not read and write, and he is happy enough."

"I shall study a while longer," replied Philip, "and then perhaps it will be easier for me."

As the days came and went the number of scholars at the school grew less and less. Philip went every day and he often remained after the others had gone in order that the teacher might help him with some difficult lesson. Matthew would

remain away from school and climb the hills with other boys and often come home at night with his basket full of fish.

"Let's go fishing tomorrow. What's the use of spending one's time trying to learn to read from old books? It is a lot more fun out on the hills," Matthew would say.

"But I want to know how to read and to write. The teacher says I am learning well and that I must not give up," Philip would reply.

So the days sped on and the weeks and months passed. Matthew left school. "What's the use of all that work in a stuffy old school room?" he would say to the boys.

"I read a story through today with only one mistake," Philip would tell them with pride.

Of course it was hard to study a book and spend hours in learning rules so he could not forget them, when his mates were gathering nuts in the pasture lands or swimming in the river when the days were hot. But Philip was a boy who did not like to give up and admit that a few rules could master him. Then he wanted to know how to read a book and to write a letter. Had he not heard the King's messenger read from a great document? Surely he had to spend many hours away from play before he could read like that.

When the months had become a year and the

years had passed until the boys were young men, something happened in the village. The King's messenger came again, in great haste. His uniform was of a somber color and he carried a sword by his side. A bugler called all the people together and the messenger read a summons from the King. An ancient foeman had crossed the frontiers and the King called all the able-bodied men to help drive the enemy back across the borders. This meant war.

There was a hush among the people. Great was their love for their King and they saw but one duty. They would be loyal to their native land. Two days later the young men were in uniform. As they marched down the village street to the strains of their national air Matthew and Philip were shoulder to shoulder.

The war brought sorrow to the village, as wars always do. The sons had grown into men over night and the fathers were proud of them. Never once did they think of being defeated, but they knew that victory would cost them dearly in the lives of the ones they loved. Weary months of fighting and waiting passed, and other sorrowful months of waiting and fighting were to follow. Philip and Matthew had been comrades of long marches and dangerous days. The love that had grown between them in boyhood was deepened under the stress of battle and trench. They had shared with each other

the last crust of bread and often divided between them the last drop of water from their canteens.

The fortunes of war brought the battle line at last close to the village where Philip and Matthew had lived as boys. Their fathers and mothers, with all the older people, had been driven to another village farther back among the hills. On the morrow the armies were to meet in what might be the great battle of the war. Late that night a captain called his men together and told them of a dangerous mission that must be undertaken. A message had to be carried through the mountains and around the enemy's lines to the King. Were there two men among them who were accustomed to traveling in the mountains and who would volunteer to go? "It is a dangerous mission, and it may mean death. The two who go will bear a special message to the King. Never again will you have an opportunity to show such devotion to him and to your native land. Who will go?"

Many were willing and anxious to go. But Philip stepped forward, saluted, and said, "Matthew and I were born in the village yonder and as boys we played over these hills. We know the ranges and the valleys and we have been comrades through all the war. We pledge our lives if we may go as special messengers to our King."

It was decided that Philip and Matthew should

go. Their hearts swelled with a great pride. When the others had gone back to their blankets and their campfires these two comrades stood alone in the night and kissed each other. Had not their dreams come true? Soon they would be out upon the hills following a familiar brook back to the spring from which it rose and then beyond to another brook that flowed in the opposite direction. They were ready and eager to be away.

But it so happened that there were necessary requirements for all men who were to serve as special messengers to the King. They had to know how to read and to write. Philip passed the test. The great hour of his life had struck and he was ready. Matthew failed. The King needed him and he could not go.

Long before dawn came into the valley Philip and a stranger saluted each other and the two started upon a mission of danger and high honor. Their native land had called them and the King was waiting their coming. As they passed the last campfire Philip saw Matthew standing alone under a great tree. His face was hidden in the shadows, but his breast was heaving like the sea after a mighty storm.

THE SHINING RUNNERS

NED and Harry were twins. Not only were they as like as two peas in a pod, but Father and Mother always dressed them just alike. Strangers could not tell them apart. Often their friends found it difficult to be sure which was Harry and which was Ned. Of course Father and Mother always knew, even when they saw them far up the street, coming home from school. But while they looked so much alike there was a difference between them. It is because of this difference that I am telling you the story of the shining runners.

When Christmas came Father and Mother always planned to give the boys at least two presents that were just alike. On this particular Christmas the choice of presents was a happy one; each was given a long, low cut, racy looking sled. There was not a bit of difference between them. So much alike were they that it was necessary for each of the boys to print his name on the smooth under-surface of the body. They surely were beauties as they stood side by side leaning against the window sill. Ned patted his and Harry said, "You just wait until school begins again, and then what fun!"

Christmas morning was crisp and cold. The hill outside the boys' home was exactly right for a wonderful slide. When the presents were all unwrapped and the merrymaking and "thank you's" were over they all had to get ready to go over to visit grandfather and grandmother. But before they went Father had a suggestion that greatly interested the boys.

"There will be time for just one slide before we leave for grandfather's. But upon New Year's Day I shall be at home. What do you say to a sliding party on our hill? We can ask all the other boys and girls and their parents. Perhaps we can have a race. It will be fun for mother and me to be young again and slide with you all down the long hill."

Of course the boys were excited and happy. When Father talked like that it meant that everybody was going to have a good time.

The morning after Christmas the long hill was calling the boys. With a whoop they took their sleds out for a slide. Ned went down the hill once, but a boy wanted to slide with him and he was afraid the two of them might harm his sled. So he went into the house and read a book that had been given to him for Christmas. Harry slid down the hill, over and over again, and often there would be another on his sled with him. Once they were

tipped over at the foot of the hill as they attempted to turn into a neighbor's yard. But that did not dampen their spirits for the fun of another slide.

A few days later there came a storm of sleet and then the hill was covered with crusts of ice. The boys were ready for the thrill that would be theirs as they threw themselves upon their sleds and went away at full speed. Ned almost tipped over as he ran out of the road and headed straight for a clump of bushes. This made him think of his new sled, and he said, "I may scratch it upon this ice, so I will wait until the fresh snow comes and then I will slide again." Harry sped down the hill, time and time again, before mother called him to lunch.

After lunch Harry was ready for some more fun. "Come on, Ned, let us take our sleds and go out upon the street and meet the boys."

Ned thought, 'They may want to borrow my sled." So he replied, "I think I shall stay at home and finish the book I commenced the other day."

All the afternoon Harry played with the boys. Often he loaned his sled to a lad who did not have one of his own. Just before he went home for supper he met Aunt Molly Green carrying a basket of clothes to the great house on the hill. He ran up to her and said, "Hello, Aunt Molly. Put your basket on my sled and I will haul it up the hill for you." She thanked him and held it there while he hauled

it up to the great house, and then helped her carry it into the kitchen. When he came out again he saw that the basket had scratched his sled. Of course he was sorry but he thought, "Well, now I can have the long ride back home again." When he took his sled into the house Ned noticed that it was scratched. He stood his own shining sled beside Harry's and said, "I always take good care of my Christmas gifts."

Father heard Ned's remark and he asked Harry to read the evening paper to him as his own eyes were weary with the brightness of the snow.

New Year's morning dawned bright and clear. The hill was perfect for sliding. Soon all the children of the neighborhood had gathered and many of their fathers and mothers were with them. What a time they did have. It was difficult to tell which was parent and which was son as they slid together down the long hill and shouted as they passed each other. If you never have seen a sliding party on a long hill, when fathers and mothers are there, you have missed a sight that is worthy of being remembered.

At last the moment for the race came. Six boys were selected and lined up at the starting place. Among them were Harry and Ned. At the signal away they went. It was not many seconds before everybody knew that Harry would win the race.

When the ones who were at the foot of the hill saw them coming, they beheld the happy face of a boy upon a new, low cut, racy looking sled in the lead of all the others. Ned finished far behind.

That night after supper they were talking about the race. "How does it seem to be champion, Harry?" said Father.

"My, but isn't mine a speedy sled?" replied Harry.

"Why is it more speedy than mine?" asked Ned.

Here was Father's opportunity. "Bring me your sleds, boys." He stood them by the fireplace with their tops against the wall.

"Well, Ned, I will tell you why you could not win the race. Sleds were made to be used. Harry has used his and you have been so careful of yours that you have not marred the paint. Harry has slid down the hill many times. The other day I saw Tom Matthews with Harry's sled. Tom is a fine boy, but his mother can not afford to buy him a sled. I met Aunt Molly Green yesterday and she told me how Harry hauled her basket of clothes up the long hill on his new sled. She was afraid that her basket scratched it a bit. I saw the scratches and to me they made the sled even more beautiful. But all the while Harry was wearing his runners smooth and Ned was letting his remain black and rough. Look at the runners now. Ned's still have

some of the paint on them that was there on Christmas morning. Harry's are smooth and shining. Is it any wonder that Harry won the race?"

That was years ago. The boys have grown to manhood now and both have children of their own. The lesson they learned when they were boys, and the one they teach their children when the long hill is smooth with snow and ice, can be taught in the story of the shining runners.

BUYING THINGS FROM GOD

HENRY always was complaining. Nothing suited him. His knife had a broken blade and he wanted a new knife. His bicycle, "rusty old thing," was fit for the junk heap. Never in his life had he seen such a wreck of a wagon as he had to use when he went for groceries. His complaints were many and his joys all were colored with disappointment.

Henry's father was distracted, and his mother shed real tears. What were they to do? If their boy grew up to be a man with that disposition everybody would shout when they saw him coming, "Oh dear, here comes old Mr. Growler." That never would do. Something had to be done; there was no doubt about that.

The final straw that broke the back of the patience of Henry's parents was this. One day he came home from school and found Father and Mother waiting for him in the living room. They greeted him and then led him up to a blanket thrown over something by the wall. When they removed the blanket, what should Henry see but a brand new bicycle? It was a beauty. Any boy's heart should have been glad. Not so Henry's. He

looked it over and said, "Fred's bicycle has a larger tool kit and—"

"That will do," said his father. "Mother, you call Widow Jones' son Robert on the telephone and tell him that if he will come over here he can have this new bicycle. Henry, go to your room at once." Henry went. He also had his supper there, and all alone.

After supper Father called him to go riding. They drove past the largest bicycle store in town. "Do you see the bicycles in there, Henry? You can have all of them if you want them." What was happening to Father? Soon they were out in the country, passing a lovely house on a hill. "Look at that beautiful home, Henry. You can have one just like it, some day." Had Father inherited a million dollars? Just after they had turned towards home they met old Mr. Brown, the banker, the richest man in town. "You can have Mr. Brown's place in this town, Henry." Henry looked at his father in surprise. Surely he must be losing his mind. Horrors! was he crazy?

That night Father went up with Henry to bed. Both were silent until the light was out. Then just before Father left the room he told Henry what was deep in his heart.

"Henry, we have listened to your complaining a long time. You are losing all your friends, and often

your mother is in tears. We have done our best and it is up to you now. Do you want wonderful things, all your own, by and by? Well then, you must get them for yourself. The old Greeks had a proverb. Repeat it after me, Henry." This is what they said, there in the darkness together. "The gods sell all things at the price of toil. The gods sell all things at the price of toil."

"Good night, Henry."

In Henry's bed there was no sleep. He tossed and turned and even cried a little. His thoughts were long, long thoughts about the years that were to be, far, far away. Often he repeated the old Greek proverb. "The gods sell all things at the price of toil." Along towards midnight he clenched his fists and said, "Tomorrow I shall begin to buy the things I want, and part of them will be for good old Dad and dear, dear Mother."

Ten minutes later a moonbeam stole into the room and found him sound asleep.

WHAT CHEATING DID FOR STEVE

STEVE was, on the whole, a fine boy. But one day he made a great mistake. This is how it happened.

It was examination day and he was afraid he would not pass. He had been busy with many things, and, against his mother's advice, had neglected to study his lessons for several weeks. Now what was he to do? On this particular day he studied every minute until the bell rang and he had to go to his place in the schoolroom and write all he knew about a subject he had slighted. He slipped his book in his pocket in his hurry to get a good seat back next to the wall.

Well, as was to be expected, the questions were posers. He could answer but few of them, and how he hated to fail. The word "flunk" was big and threatening. If he only had studied as his mother had urged him to! Let me tell you quickly what he did and have the horrible matter over with. Steve slyly took out his book, opened it, read the answers and wrote them down as though they came directly from his memory of hard study. Then all the world was changed for Steve.

As he glanced up from his paper Anne was look-

ing at him. She smiled. That was nothing new, as Anne had smiled at him many times before. But now it was different. Had she seen him cheat? Did her smile have a sneer in it? Steve wondered.

Donald was Steve's good friend. Donald shook his fist at him in old pal fashion. But was there something more in the fist than just a friendly challenge? Steve thought there must be and he said, "Don knows I am a lie."

As Steve passed his paper in to the teacher she looked at him, right through her glasses, and said, "You finished quickly, Stephen." Had she seen him? He hurried out. On the stairs he met the principal of the school. Someone had sent for him, perhaps. Hastening by, he saw the superintendent in the school yard. Horrors! Did they all know? The old book he dropped in the river as he crossed the bridge towards home.

That night at supper Steve was not hungry. When the telephone rang his heart beat like a trip-hammer and he could hardly breathe until he heard his father talking with the neighbor across the street about the lawnmower. Right there he said to himself, "Tomorrow morning I will get up early and mow the lawn."

When Steve went to bed there were no ghosts in his room but his mind was haunted with terrible things. Tomorrow everybody would know,

perhaps, and oh, the shame of it. Great goblins stuck out their tongues at him, and red-eyed harpies crept near to him, and all among them were his sad-eyed friends. At last he called his father. What they said to each other there in the dark is a secret between a father and his boy.

A few days later the teacher said, "Stephen, I am going to have a few children take the examination over again tonight. Do you want to come along with them?"

Steve wanted to come.

As he left the room and passed a good examination paper to the teacher, she spoke to him. "Steve, you are a brick." When Father came home that night, he squeezed Stephen's shoulders and said, "Steve, old boy, I am proud of you." A little later Mother looked out and saw him cutting weeds from the garden walk, and he was whistling.

SEARCHING FOR A FRIEND

One night the Boy had heard his father read from an old book about two young friends by the names of Jonathan and David. The story was so full of simple and moving beauty that the two lads lived again in the Boy's heart. The talk that followed was about the beauty of friendship. So earnestly did his father speak about the wonder of the way of two friends, that the Boy determined to walk in such a way himself. The gentle voice of his mother was full of tenderness as she told them of a friend she had when she was a girl and who often now came and sat with her by the fireside and talked with her of days that were gone and of days that were to come. As her son listened he said in his heart, "It must be wonderful to have a friend; tomorrow I will find one and we will go the glad way of Jonathan and David."

So when the morrow came the Boy started forth to find a friend. Why should he wait longer to enjoy the good thing of which his father spoke with such warmth and his mother told him about with so much tenderness? Today as well as tomorrow, and even better, was what he had upon his mind as

he pulled his cap down over his eyes and started forth early to school.

Soon he came to a house where there lived a lad he knew. Running into his home, he asked the mother where he might find him. "Up in his room," she replied.

So up he ran and rushing in said, "Come with me and be my friend, even as Jonathan was the friend of David."

The lad looked at him and replied, "I am sorry, but I can not go with you now. I have my lesson to learn and then if I have time I must go round by my friend's house and walk with him to school."

The Boy looked at him for a moment, and then disappointment came into his heart as he knew he must look elsewhere to find one who would go with him along the new and happy road. He walked slowly the rest of the way to school.

At recess that day his hopes were high again. Soon he saw a youth sitting upon the steps and all alone, while the others were running at their play. The Boy went up to him and said, "Come with me and be my friend and we will walk together in the wonderful way my father knows so well."

The youth looked at him for a moment before he spoke. "I can not now. You see, I am waiting for

my friend who is coming soon to go with me on an errand to his home."

The Boy looked at him in great surprise and then his face colored with anger as he turned his back upon the youth. Was the way of friendship so beautiful after all? Surely it was hard to make the start in order that he might know.

On his way home from school that night he thought he would try once more. Just before he reached his own gate he saw a neighbor's son reading a book upon the veranda. Running up the steps he called, "Put away your book and come with me and we will be two friends even like the two friends Jonathan and David. Hurry and come now."

The neighbor's son looked up from his reading and answered, "I must finish my book, and then Father and I are going to take my friend for a long ride out to the river beyond the town. I am busy and can not go." Tears came to the Boy's eyes as he hurried home.

After supper he said to himself, "I will make one more attempt to walk in friendship's way." So out he went into the street, determined to find a friend.

It was not long before he met a lad about his own age. He was coming from a game of ball and he limped as he walked. The Boy stopped him and said, "I see you are all alone. I am all alone, too.

Come with me and be my friend and we will go together always and stand each for the other and love each other as we are known by the names of Jonathan and David."

The limping lad paused for a moment, and then spoke these words. "Don't you see I have hurt my knee in the game? I must hasten home so mother can bathe it for me and make it well. Tomorrow will be Saturday and I must go with my friend to the grove where the chestnuts are." Then he passed on. The Boy was angry and the hot tears burst from his eyes as he turned towards home and ran as fast as ever he could.

That night when his father read again from the old book, the Boy found it hard to listen. No sooner had they begun to talk about the story than the Boy exclaimed, "Father, what you and Mother said about Jonathan and David I have found is not true. Today I have sought four times to find a friend, and each time the one to whom I spoke has turned his back upon me and left me all alone."

Of course the father was surprised, and the mother was grieved. Soon they had the story from the trembling lips of the Boy. Then the parents saw how it all had happened. Their son wanted a friend but they had neglected to tell him, and he never had learned, how friends always are to be

won. So they told him the old, old story of life's best way. When he went to bed there was more wisdom in his heart.

The next morning was Saturday. The Boy ate his breakfast in silence and then did a few errands for his mother. After that he raked the lawn so his father could rest when he came home from his work at noon. When dinner was over he kissed his mother on the cheek and, waving his hand to his father, started off down the street. Soon he passed the house where a new family had just come to live. There was a lad his own age having trouble getting a heavy box up the steps. The Boy hurried up and called, "Let me help you; it will be easier for two." Soon they knew each other by name and where they came from and what they thought of school. All the sunny afternoon they hurried to and fro, the Boy forgetting his search for a friend and the lad happy that one had come to him in his loneliness in a new home. Their hearts were merry and they loved each other even before they knew it.

When they parted at supper time the lad spoke out of his heart. "Come again, as often as you can, and I will go to see you, too. My, but I am glad you came today."

The Boy called back, "Some time you must come and stay all night with me. Father will read us a story about Jonathan and David, who lived

long ago. Another day I will help you make the lines straight along the walks."

That night there was gladness in the Boy's heart. "Oh, Father, I have found the best friend in all the world. He is the new boy on our street and I helped him in his work with the boxes and the rugs. And just think, Mother! Some night he will come and stay with me and we can read again the story about the two boys who lived so long ago."

Father and Mother knew what two boys he meant. And, better still, they knew that their own Boy had learned well one of life's great lessons.

OVER A MILLION DOLLARS!

JAMES was always grumbling. I say always; that may be a bit unfair to him, but behind his back the girls called him "Old Grouch." The boys' pet name for him was "Sorehead." Father and Mother were worried about him and sister said, "Isn't he just like a boy?" So you can see there was something very wrong with him.

One of James's chief complaints against the world in general was this: he had no money. He often called himself the poorest boy in school. Why should Ned's father be rich and have a store and live in a great house while his own father only worked in the store and lived in a cottage? Was there any fairness in Tom's going to the seashore for the summer while he had to stay at home and help around the yard and house? Many a mother he knew kept a maid. It all was wrong and he was a great sufferer. At times he threatened to run away from it all, but when the day of his departure came he had no money for railroad fare and so he had to stay in his poverty. Once in a while he said, "I will go tomorrow." But tomorrow never came. His mother and his sister had to hear him sputter. Poor sister! Patient mother!

One day Uncle Charles came to visit at his home. Now Uncle Charles was rich. He had money in the bank and often wrote real checks that could be exchanged for cash. Uncle Charles gave James a check once, and then went with him to the bank while he had it changed into bills. What a thrill it was to get real money from a bank with big stone pillars in front and a long row of brass and glass cages on the inside. Perhaps Uncle Charles would give him another check. If he only would!

All the afternoon, whenever James was near Uncle Charles, he would commence to grumble and complain. "Oh dear, I do so want to go to the circus next week; but then, I never have any money." "How I do need a new bicycle; but what's the use, you can't find any money around here." "Isn't that just my luck? Tom Smith's party coming off pretty soon and I haven't any clothes fit to wear. Oh, why does Father stay in that old store and work for such small pay?" And so on and so on. Of course, Uncle Charles knew what it all was about and he planned to give James a lot of money, providing James would sell him something in exchange.

That night at the supper table James began again. But before he got very far Uncle Charles spoke to him in tones that meant business. "Now Jim, look here. All I have heard since I came is your

grumbling about not having any money. I know your mother must be tired of it all. It grieves me to see my sister have to endure such a fault-finding son as you are. Now let me tell you what I'll do. Your mother needs a rest, and I should think she would be glad to get away from you. I can take her to California and she need never see you again. What do you say to a bargain? I will give you one million dollars for your mother and take her away in the morning. You can have the money and she can have a rest. Come on now." With that Uncle Charles took out his check book and his pen and began to write.

James was dumb. In fact, he was angry, way down deep. To think of such a thing. The very idea of it. Sell his mother? Was Uncle Charles crazy? "It's against the law," he blurted out, after he had found his tongue. "You think you can do anything with your old money, don't you? You can't have my mother. What do you think I am, anyway?"

Uncle Charles wrote some figures in the back of his check book and was silent for a moment. He wanted James to have some money, very evidently. But he did not want to offer more than anything was worth to him. So after a bit Uncle Charles said, "Well, Jim, let us see if we can not strike a bargain after all. You want some money and I

want you to have it. Suppose I give you—well now, suppose—suppose I give you ten thousand dollars for your father. He must be tired of your everlasting complaining. He can go to Europe with me next summer and never again hear you and your eternal grumbling. Come on, now, and give your father a rest."

With that Uncle Charles again began to write in his check book. But James stopped him. "Say, do you think you can do a thing like that? He wouldn't go, anyhow. And besides, my father *is not for sale*. So don't try to buy him again."

For a time all was silent. James ate glumly, but he kept on eating. His worry about money never did seem to take his appetite away from him.

But Uncle Charles was not to be outdone. He wanted James to have some money. So he said, "Look here, Jim. I'll tell you what we ought to do. Your sister wants to go away to school. You must cause her a lot of worry and trouble as you go about with your fault-finding disposition. I should think she would not want any of her girl friends to see you at all. This is what I will do. If you will sell me your sister, so I can send her away from you where she can have some peace, I'll give you,—let me see; I'll give you—two hundred fifty dollars."

James looked at his sister and thought he saw her smile. Perhaps she wanted to go. Well, she should stay right where she was. She wasn't half bad, as sisters went, anyhow. "No sirree, you can keep your old money. Sis is all right where she is. You can't buy any of my people with your checks."

Not to be outdone, Uncle Charles started to talk about buying James' dessert, but James would have none of it. He was aroused and in no mood to bargain, even though a million dollars was his for saying "Yes."

James ate in silence, and no one spoke except Mother, who always could be depended upon to say the thing that would make it easier for a fellow. Just before they arose from the table Uncle Charles said, "Now, Jim, never again do I want to hear you say a word about your being poor. Here I have offered you a million ten thousand two hundred fifty dollars, and you have said 'No.' "

All that evening James appeared a bit restless. He didn't talk and he could not seem to read. So after a bit he went off to bed. Mother went up, as usual, and did a few little things for her boy, and then put out the light. This night something happened that had not taken place for a long time. When the light was out and mother was going, James called her back. He reached out his hands

and took hold of hers and pulled her down to him and hugged her tight. Then he kissed her on the cheek. He never said a word and Mother was silent, too, as she went out softly and closed the door.

THE BEST FRIEND IN THE WORLD

One day in school the teacher asked an old question. "Who is the best friend in all the world?" Of course, the interest among the scholars was very keen. Everybody seemed to have an answer. But somehow it takes more than a question and an answer to find the truth about any matter.

Ralph had just been reading a story out of a new book his aunt had given him on his birthday and so his answer grew out of a wonderful scene in the story. "I know, a dog. Of all animals in the world a dog is man's best friend. In a book I am reading there is a story about a dog by the name of Rex, and—" The teacher thought it would take too much time for Ralph to tell the entire story so she had to give someone else an opportunity to find an answer.

Frank was fond of uniforms and history books that told about wars. So his reply was to be expected. "A soldier is the best friend in the world. He fights to win the liberties we enjoy and whenever our country is in danger, why he takes his gun and goes out to fight for us all. Give me a soldier, every time."

Ellen remembered the summer she had spent

several weeks in the country upon a great farm. "Why, the farmer is our best friend. Does he not raise food for us all? Ralph's dog would not be any good unless he had a bone and Frank's soldier could not fight unless he had food to eat. Don't you see that the farmer is our best friend?"

The answers were coming fast and hot, and the interest was very great. Martha was thinking as hard as ever she could. Of course, she had no thought of pleasing anyone in particular when she made her answer. "A good teacher is the best friend in the world. What good would food do, or how could a soldier fight unless there was someone to teach him? A teacher takes us when we are ignorant and leads us until we know many things. A good teacher is the best friend in the world."

Just then something happened. A big bee flew into the schoolroom through an open window. After frightening the children it stung Helen right upon the cheek. It hurt her dreadfully. Of course, poor Helen cried a little, even though she tried not to. Most girls would have cried, I am sure. Soon her cheek was swollen and her eyes were red. The children did not know what to do. The teacher put a wet handkerchief upon the swollen cheek, and Helen cried, "I want to go home." So two of the older boys walked home with her, and her mother met them at the door.

Had you gone by Helen's home that evening and peeped through the window, this is what you would have seen. Helen was resting upon the couch in the living room and several soft pillows were at her back and under her head. Some white powder was over the swollen cheek. Helen's mother was reading her a story about a wonderful land where it was always summer. Helen's eyes rested upon her mother's face for a few minutes and then she smiled, ever so faintly, before she spoke in her most loving tones.

"Oh, Mother, wait a minute and let me tell you about a question the teacher asked us today. Not a boy or a girl knew the right answer. But I know what the answer is; it came to me just now as I watched your face while you were reading me a story."

THE CASTLE AND THE BIRDS

HIGH upon the hillside back from the village and facing the great range was an ancient castle. It was old as far back as the oldest inhabitant could remember. Indeed, aged men said that their grandfathers had told them how it was considered ancient when they were boys. Had you read the great book that contained the annals of the parish you would have learned that the castle was being builded when good men were carving the stones that were now part of the Cathedral. That, as everybody should know, was many hundreds of years ago.

Could you have visited the castle you would have seen ruins of the old drawbridge that once could be let down for friends to cross the moat through the high arched gate into the castle area. The moat was dry now, and the gate was open to all who might wish to enter. The great hall was crowded with relics of the chase. The walls were covered with pictures of other generations and the arms of men who long ago had hung them there never to take them down again. The rooms were full of memories and one could almost hear faint echoes of

voices that had made merry in the long gone days. It was a place to visit and never to forget. There it stood, like a grim gray watcher above the village, its turrets reminding one of sentinels who sought to guard the generations as they came and passed at their feet.

Of the old line of men and women who had made the castle their home in other generations only one lone man remained. He was the last of a noble race, but the nobility of his fathers he did not know. Even the story of their lives he had no interest in reading. Why should he care about the past? Was that not dead and gone? The present was his, and in the golden days that were ahead he desired to live his life. Let other men sing the songs of generations that were no more. He would make his music in another key. The songs that cheered him most were the ones he sang with a few companions when the sound of clinking glasses filled his ears and the laughter of muddled minds was an accompaniment to the singing. If the walls of the old hall could have spoken, the words would have been of sorrow and disappointment.

One night the owner of the castle made a discovery. He was sitting all alone before a dying fire. The friends who were visiting him had long since retired and the servants had gone to their quarters. He was thinking of the revelry of the day that had

closed and how it was to continue upon the morrow. There was a queer whirring sound that called him from his reveries. At first he thought it might be the wind coming through an open window down the long corridor beside the hall. Then again it sounded like tides as they rose and fell upon a beach that was far away. Soon he became aware of something he always had known but somehow always had forgotten. The sound was that of whirring wings. He was not the lone dweller in the castle. There were two birds that lived there with him. The discovery did not fill him with surprise. Rather did he say to himself, "How strange! I always knew they were here and in earlier years they spent much time with me. Of late I have forgotten and paid little attention to them. Tonight they seem to be with me again. I wonder why."

When he looked about the room, he saw the two birds hovering around him like the spirits of his fathers. As he beheld them again he recalled with great vividness how they had always acted and how each looked. One was smaller than the other, and milk white, with a tint of pale red across the breast and throat. The eyes were like the eyes of a dove, and yet they reminded him of the eyes of a little sister he had lost when he was a boy. The white bird's voice was as sweet as a nightingale's and as pleading as the voice of a child. The other

bird was larger, and dull gray in color. Across its breast and even up to its throat there was a tinge of a darker hue. Its eyes were small and deep-set with a haunted look in them. When it raised its voice it sounded as hollow as the winter winds howling around the turrets of the castle.

Long had the birds been enemies. There had been times when he was aware of their bitter quarrels. Often it had seemed to him as though their battles had been carried on within his own heart, as well as in the great hall and in the courtyard. Tonight the battle was on again and he could hear the beating of their wings. Why should they quarrel so? Was there not room for both? Could they not live in peace? Must there always be war between them? When he looked again he saw that the larger bird was the aggressor and that the white bird fought with all its strength, even though its breast was a deeper crimson and one of its wings seemed all but helpless.

As the battle continued the owner of the castle remembered how the birds had been his constant companions. So used had he become to their presence that for years he had almost forgotten that they lived at all. These were the memories that flooded into his mind as he sat before the dead embers of the fire and listened to the beating of wing against wing.

One day when he was a boy his father had sent him into the great hall to bring him the battle axe of one of his ancestors who had fought for the king in an old war. As he took the great weapon from the wall there fell from the handle two precious jewels. When they rolled upon the floor they looked like bits of blue moonlight in the room. His first thought was, "I can keep these, and no one will be the wiser. Then some day I can sell them and travel all alone to distant lands." So he put them in his pocket and went out into the castle yard where his father was waiting for him. As he handed his father the great axe he heard the most wonderful music. At that he took the jewels out of his pocket and handed them to his father and told him how they had fallen from the handle when he took it from the wall. Looking at him tenderly his father said, "You may keep the one you like better for your very own." As he returned to his room the white bird came and hovered over him and sang to him its loveliest song.

There was another time when he was sent upon an errand to the good men who lived at the Cathedral. He was to carry them pieces of gold in order that they might buy food for the poor of the village. All the way across the hills he was saying to himself, "Why give all the money to the men in black robes? Surely I shall keep some of it and use

it as I wish." The sound of a sweet song came to him but he hurried on and would not listen. When he returned to the castle there was part of the money in his pocket, and the gray bird was shrieking around his ears.

Again he recalled how, after his father had gone and the period of mourning was over, he had at first given parties in the castle to the village people. Sometimes he would provide for all the poor folks a holiday. The workmen would come, with their wives and children. Then they would make merry all the livelong day. Towards sunset the men would sit and talk about the glory of the old times and their wives would listen to the tales of former valor. The children would romp through the castle yard and climb the stairs to the turret rooms and then rest in the great hall and imagine ancient wars where men fought with spears and battle axes. The owner of the castle would go among them as an older brother would walk among the younger members of the family. When they all were gone home the white bird would come and sing to him, and the gray bird would sulk in a far corner of the hall.

There were other days when some of his friends would come from distant places. Many were the stories they would tell and long into the night

would they sit and clink their glasses and sing their songs. There would be nights of revelry, when their minds would lose their balance and their tongues would be set loose by a liquid that releases all that is base in man. Their eyes would turn to the color of blood as they would babble about foolish things and make boasts of a bravery that long ago had passed out of their hearts. Then when the friends would go home the white bird would sing a quiet plaintive song while the gray bird would croak and scream in a voice that would freeze the blood of many men.

And so the battle had gone on, year in and year out, until much of the time the owner of the castle had forgotten that the birds were with him in the great hall and in the castle yard. But tonight he could not forget. He was growing old and the battle seemed, more than ever, to be not only in the room around his chair, but in his own breast. Wing beat against wing and shrill cry was mingled with a gentle call that sounded like his sister's voice. As he turned his bloodshot eyes toward the birds he saw that the white one was steadily losing strength. Still he fought on, with his feathers covered with red. The great gray thing thrust his body against the white form that darted here and there, and crowded it against a large lifelike painting of a

lady that hung upon the wall. A rent was torn in the canvas and the owner of the castle screamed, "In God's name, stop your fighting." The painting was that of his mother and where the likeness of her lovely face had been there was nothing but an ugly tear. The man put his hands to his face and moaned aloud. Then he lost memory of all things that ever had been and hope for all things that ever were to be.

When the morning came, the man who owned the castle rose to his feet and saw the image of himself in the polished shield of one of his ancestors that was hanging on the wall. He was bent and gray and his eyes had lost their glow. His mother's face he could not see. Away in a far corner was a white bird, broken and bleeding, feebly attempting to sing a song that had in it strains of hope. The great gray shape was perched upon the back of his chair, and its raucous voice was like the croaking of a wild and haunted thing.

Then the owner of the castle spoke to himself in his despair. "Oh, fool that I am. Long ago I should have welcomed my poor white friend to my castle and my heart. In my folly I have kept with me here both his enemy and mine. I wonder if it is now too late. Does the crimson upon his breast mean that he has spent all his strength in the last struggle of the night? Is there hope only in his

song? Could he help me drive the gray thing from my chair?"

Even as he spoke, the white bird flew straight at his ancient enemy and fought again the old, old battle that had been waged for years.

EAT YOUR CRUST FIRST

WHEN I was a very small boy my father taught me a lesson I have always remembered. It all came about because of a piece of mince pie. Did you ever eat a piece of mince pie? Well, some people say it is not good for boys, and perhaps they are right. But then I know they are not thinking about the kind of mince pie my mother used to make. But I must not tell you how good the mince pie used to be because then you would not listen to my story. That would be too bad, because my father was a wise man and his lesson is worth remembering.

Often it happened that we had mince pie for dessert at dinner. But way up in Vermont our dinner came at the middle of the day and not as it does here where children eat and then go right to bed. Oh, I am sure you city boys and girls do not have all the fun. Indeed, I wonder if you ever have as good appetites as we boys of the country used to have.

But I am to tell you about my father and the mince pie. It was always fat mince pie. You know

what I mean. The crust was thin and flaky and the mince meat was thick and juicy. And oh, the wonder of it. Hidden away in every piece I was sure to find several luscious raisins. I can see them now as they roll out on the plate, ready for a hungry boy to eat. Sometimes, when we were at the table alone, my father would say, after we had eaten our piece of pie, "Mother, that last piece of pie seems to beckon to sonny and me; please?"—and then Mother would reply, "Oh, what boys you two are! Well, if you want it; but remember, you must be good boys." So the second piece would come to my plate and then—.

But I simply must not tell you how it tasted. Let me, please, get on with my story. My father taught me this lesson, with these words, "Boy, your mother makes wonderful pie. But listen. Of course, to be a pie it must have a crust." This is what my father said to me. "Always eat the thick back crust first." And then he would show me what he meant. He would cut the thick back crust free from the pie and eat it first. I would do the same. It was not always pleasant, but always easier first than to wait and eat it last, because I simply had to leave my plate well cleaned before I left the table. But oh, the joy when the crust was gone. Then there was the pie, without the thick back crust, juicy and with a raisin in sight. But let me tell you what my

father taught me, oh, long, long ago when I was a very small boy. This was it! A day is like a piece of mince pie. There are the two flaky crusts above and beneath to hold the day together. And then there is the thick back crust. Always eat that crust first.

Whenever I hear a boy say, "Oh dear, I will bring up the coal by and by. Let me play now," I always feel like saying, "Eat your crust first, my boy." Sometimes when I hear a girl call, "Oh, Mama, let me go up to Mary's now and I will practice this afternoon," I have hard work not to shout, "Eat your crust first, little girl." Once in a while I hear a man say, or a woman exclaim, "I will do that piece of work tomorrow, but I am going to rest now." Then I almost shout, "Eat your crust first." Sometimes, when I try to put off a hard task, I seem to hear my father call to me, across all the years, "Eat your crust first, my boy. Eat your crust first."

Out of the past he calls to me, and his voice is that of one who never shirked a hard thing today in order that it might wait until tomorrow. Life to him was a matter of luscious pie with a raisin here and there. And so it is for me. But his lesson is like a blessing from the long ago. If I obey it I always find things better in the end. So may it be with you tomorrrow and tomorrow after that. Every day

is like a piece of pie made by loving hands. How I wish you could hear my father's voice as he said to me long ago, "Eat your crust first, my boy. Eat your crust first."

A FRIEND IN NEED

THE day of the picnic on the Island some of the children had gone for a long walk. The way back around by the old ruin was longer than they had thought. When they returned to the landing there was no one to be seen. Soon the truth came home to them that the boat had gone off with the others and left them there alone. Of course in the scurry to get aboard no one had missed them. They had been so busy with their play that they had not heard the whistle. What were they to do? But few people lived on the island and most of the houses were on the far side. Another boat would not come until long after dark. By this time they had without doubt discovered on the boat that they were not there. What, oh what were they to do? The parents at home would worry and be afraid for the safety of their children. The oldest of the group were frightened and the youngest cried as though their hearts would break. There was the lone wharf where the steamer had called, and the steamer was far away around a headland of the island.

Just then they heard a new voice. A strange lady was passing that way and she heard the children

as they talked. "What is the matter?" she asked. They told her their sad story. Then she began to scold. "The very idea! One would suppose they would look out for children who were at a picnic. Where were the older ones? Were they all crazy? If I had any children they never would stir to a picnic unless I went along to keep my eyes upon them. Suppose the boat does not come back tonight? One would think the world was made up of foolish people. I am sorry for you poor children." As she went on her way the smaller of the children cried and cried as though their hearts would break.

This scolding one had not been gone long when a man came by. He seemed to be in a hurry but he stopped long enough to say a word to the children. "Why are you crying? Oh, the boat went off and left you, did it? Well, it served you right. Why did you not stay with the others? Did anyone ever see such a muddle as this? And you are to blame, and no one else. Children need to be punished for such foolishness and if you have to stay here alone all night it will serve you right. Let this teach you all a lesson, is what I say." Then he hurried on his way, while the younger of the children, and some of the older ones, cried and cried as though their poor hearts would break.

It seems as though misfortunes have a way of coming one after another. The man hardly had

passed out of sight when another woman came and began to ask the children questions. When they had told her their story she began to comfort them with words like these. "Oh, you poor dears. You may have to stay here all night. One day a year or so ago the last boat did not call at the island. Then Uncle Rufus said, just as I left, that we might have a shower before morning. Such fine days are followed by showers sometimes, you know. Be very sure and keep as far away from the woods as you can. Let me see, it was only six or seven years ago that a bear was heard in these very woods. Mrs. Judkins and her girl Lizzie were passing by here on their way over to my house and they heard something in the woods. It sounded just like a bear. Oh, you poor dears. But cheer up, darlings, the morning will come and I do hope none of you will catch your death of cold." With that she hurried on. All the children cried and cried as though their poor hearts would break.

One of the older girls dried her eyes and was trying to comfort the others when they all heard a merry voice. "Well, well, did you ever! What are you all laughing about? Tell me and I will laugh with you." They saw a young man in his shirt sleeves and a cap tilted on the back of his head. His face was merry and his whole air was that of a jaunty good fellow who would be a friend to

everybody. Soon the children had told him their story, and even before they had finished the youngest of them all had stopped her crying.

After the sad tale the young man said, "How jolly! Here I am, with a few hours to spare, and I run right into as fine a lot of children of shipwrecked sailors as one ever could hope to meet. Is it not luck, though, for us all? Now let us see. What should we do? For, of course, we must do something to keep us busy and our hands out of mischief until the ship returns to pick us up and take us home. Lucky for us we are on this good island where the natives are friendly and there are no animals larger than a fox. I know; let us make believe we are to live here for a long time. Of course we shall want a king and a queen. Whom shall we have for king?"

There was much discussion but it was not long before they had elected a king and a queen and appointed watchers to keep a lookout for passing ships, and cooks who were to prepare the best of everything to eat. Of course, kings and queens have to dress in most beautiful clothes so there were garment makers and a special boy to keep watch over the crowns. Then when all was in readiness they had to go upon a journey to the far side of the wharf to visit a neighboring king and queen. The jolly young man told them how they must

curtsy when they came into the presence of royalty and many were the laughs when the king slipped and fell as he tried to walk in kingly fashion across some moss covered rocks.

After the visit to the king and queen they had to have a council of state. The king called the wise men together and they decided, after much deliberation, that it was wise to build a fire close to the shore. Such hurryings and scamperings for firewood you never saw before. All the ladies went upon a short visit with the queen to the most wonderful store in all the kingdom while the men laid the fire. Soon the ladies returned as the flames made them realize that night had come and it was almost dark. How they danced around the fire, and how they sang all the songs they knew and a wonderful new song the young man taught them about an old white horse.

"He wouldn't either go
And he wouldn't stand still,
But he bobbed up and down
Like an old saw mill."

How they laughed! Such fun they seldom had had before. Just as they were getting settled for a story they were startled by the sound of a whistle. Upon looking up they saw the light of the boat

coming around the bend. They scurried down to the wharf as familiar voices called to them across the waters. The boat soon made the landing and eagerly did the children run up the plank to meet the friends who had returned for them.

No sooner had they put off from the shore than someone called, "Where is he?" "Did he come aboard?" "No, he is back there, putting out the fire." How the sparks flew upward as he scattered the burning embers! Everyone shouted "Good-bye" to him and faintly could they see him as he waved his cap. Then they saw him no more.

One of the younger children said, "My, but wasn't he great?" And one of the older ones replied, "Yes, he was a friend in need. But oh, the others! Ugh!"

Then they all gathered upon the forward deck and sang the new song about an old white horse.

THE GATES OF PARADISE

"WHAT is the hardest lesson in the world to learn?" Were I to ask you this question I am wondering what your answer would be. I think I can imagine what some of you might say.

Not far from where I am now there is a boy who would answer like this. "That is an easy question. Language lesson is the hardest in the world."

Not many seats away from this boy there sits a girl, and I can see her as she looks up at me. I am not going to tell you her name because that would not be fair. She would say, "Why, language lessons are just as easy as can be. But arithmetic lessons are the hardest. I just can not get A in arithmetic and I get A in everything else."

I know a boy who has no trouble at all with his language lessons and his arithmetic lessons never give him the least bit of worry. But he does have a terrible time trying to learn to play the piano. Were he here he might say something like this. "Did you ever see anything as hard as piano lessons? You must sit just so and raise your fingers just so and count over a lot of foolish little black signs upon paper. Such things may be all right for

girls, but as for me it is enough to drive me mad."

No, not one of these answers is the right one. To learn to work and to wait is life's hardest lesson. Patience is the answer to the question. Let me tell you a story.

In the city of Florence there is a famous old church. Close at hand there is a baptistry where many of the great men and women of that famous old city have been baptized. Before you can enter the baptistry you must pass through two wonderful bronze gates. Of all the gates in the world many think these are the most beautiful. Michael Angelo said once, "These gates are fit to be the gates of Paradise."

Now this is what I want you to remember. Ghiberti was the name of the man who made these gates. How long do you suppose he worked upon them? A year? Three years? Ten years? No; forty-seven years! Think of that. Forty-seven years to make two gates. But they are the most beautiful in the world.

Once I heard a boy say, "If I could play the piano it would be some fun. But this everlasting practicing is too much." I wish he might know about Ghiberti.

The other day a girl said to me, "I shall not go to school any longer than I have to. What's the use of wasting one's time in studying?" Some day I

am going to call her to my study and tell her about the man who worked forty-seven years; but he is famous now.

Not long ago I met a man on the street who asked me for a dime to buy a cup of coffee and some rolls. I asked him why he begged for a living. This is what he told me. When he was a young man he gave up a position where he was learning a trade for small pay to earn more money at shovelling snow. Soon the snow was all shovelled and then the summer came. His old position had been taken by another. And so it had been for many years. First he would do one thing for a dollar and then another for a dollar and a half. Now no one wanted him at all because he never could seem to hold out and work long at any one thing. So there he was, with the gates of life wide open before him and he was begging for coffee and rolls.

What a pity he could not have read and understood the story about Ghiberti and the Gates of Paradise.

HOW THE SACO GREW

AWAY in the mountains of New Hampshire there is a jewel of a lake. Were you to be driving toward Crawford Notch from the town where I was born, you would come to a place where the sheer mountain wall rises before you, threatening to stop your further progress among the great overhanging domes. On your left you would see as lovely a little meadow as ever an Indian camped in or furnished grass for a fawn's breakfast. Just at the edge of this meadow and close to the woods is a lake. Like a pure opal in a setting of mountain and forest it is a joy to the eyes and a feast for the lover of beauty.

Of course, you would stop your car before you followed the smooth highway through the great cut in the cliff that permitted you to enter the notch, and wander down to the edge of the lake. The lovely shore line and the quiet surface, with a frequent trout breaking the water as it came up for a fly, would hold you in the spell of a great enchantment. The Lovers Walk around the lake you would find full of interest. But the place of wonder is the tiny bridge that spans the little brook

that flows away from the lake towards the mountains. Here a river is born and here it leaves its home for the first time. In the beginning the Saco is scarcely large enough to be called a brook. But there it is, singing into its unknown way, ready for any adventure. Little does it know of the great leaps and the rapid runs that are before it. How could it guess the quiet meadows where deer graze and men leave their automobiles when they come to try their luck as fishermen?

One of the delights of a vacation is to make the friendship of the brook, the singing Saco. To keep in its comradeship until it sings its way to the ocean is to add a new friend and to learn a lesson set to unforgetable music. Its song, at first, is one of trout and high mountains and a rough way. Its music you never can forget, even though you know the old masters. The lesson of its friendship is a parable of life.

One early summer morning we started to follow the brook down, down through the mountains towards its destination in the mystery of somewhere beyond. At first we lost it as we drove our car along the mountain highway. Laughingly it ran away from us, through a little valley all its own. Soon it returned to us again, with all its former gladness. It seemed as though it had grown, even in the brief time it took to flow from the

lake to the bridge across the road below the cut in the rock.

Not far down the road into the Notch are two wild and leaping things. Tumbling from the mountain high above are the Silver and the Copper Cascades. One is bright and shining, and the other is of a duller hue. They seem to be alive as they reflect the color of rainbows and throw their spray far beyond their rocky beds. As they leap from crag to abyss they resemble foaming torrents of silver and copper. Soon the Saco receives the waters from these two cascades and races on with new power. This is only the beginning of what happens over and over again. All the way down through Crawford Notch little rill and large brook flow into the growing river until at Bartlett it is powerful enough to turn the wheels of mills. How it has grown as it found its rough way through the great mountains.

At Bartlett the mountains are left behind and lesser hills are everywhere to make the way beautiful. Farm houses have been built close to the banks of the river. Cattle graze in the pasturelands and long green rows are in the cornfields. Down to the meadowlands flow other streams, and the Saco grows in size and importance as it seems to call out, "Come and flow with me, and we will make one song together." Always that meadow song is of

cattle and sheep and laboring men and barns full of hay.

After many miles of comradeship with the Saco, through a land as beautiful as God's garden, we arrived at Biddeford, a little city on the shore of the great river. Could it be possible that this was the tiny brook we had crossed upon a foot-bridge just a few hours before? It must be the same, because we had followed it all the way. It was our friend with the soul of a river as true as the soul of a man. It would not mar our friendship with deceit. How it had grown!

Beyond Biddeford was Biddeford Pool, and that was our destination. So we left our car and took a boat that sailed down our river, around the bends and towards the sea. Soon we were part of the river, flowing past the headlands and ever towards a wider expanse of water. Clumps of spruce trees growing close beside great rocks cast shadows across our faces as we passed. The summer homes, some small and lovely, others great and magnificent, painted pictures that can not be forgotten. But all the while the Saco was singing, "Soon I shall find the sea and the fisherfolk and the ships."

Oh, the marvel of it! Just around a bend the river opens out into the great Atlantic. The breakwater extends far down the coast towards Biddeford Pool. Surely the Saco has reached the sea.

Upon its bosom there is room for navies to ride at anchor. We lost its particular song in the greater harmony of many waves that came laughing in from the ocean. Our little Saco had become our great Saco until it was swallowed up by our mighty Atlantic. And why had it grown until great ships could ride upon its bosom and villages and cities be builded along its banks? Is this not the secret of its life? It took to itself the brooks and rivers that came to it by the way and used them all to become an ever-growing thing of beauty and power.

And so the river is a parable of your life and mine.

One day, years ago, I saw a very small baby girl. My mother led me to the crib and showed me the little clenched fists and the pouting mouth as she lay asleep under her pink blankets. How tiny she was! Would she ever grow to be a girl at school?

A few years later the girl came, with her mother, to visit at our home. She was full of mischief as she hid my cap behind the woodbox and frightened the chickens away from their breakfast. How she had grown! Now she could run and romp and often tire an older boy with her games and her fun. Did she look like the pink mite with clenched fists under pink blankets I had seen a few years before? Not at all. And yet there she was, the same girl, grown with the years. How many rills and

brooks of fun and tears had been added to her life? I wonder.

One day years later a letter came asking me to be the guest of a friend on Commencement Day at an old college. What a joy it was to be there, walking under the great elms, looking at the stately buildings and listening to the voices of many girls as groups passed me on the campus paths to join other groups as happy as themselves. When the procession of young women, all in cap and gown, came down the long avenue of trees towards the chapel, there was my friend among them, smiling at me as she passed. Once she had been only a little bundle in a crib, all pink and pout. Now she was a college graduate, soon to be given a bachelor's degree. Could she be the same? Life is so wonderful that I had to marvel at its ways as it increases through the years. Surely many rivers of study and friendship had flowed into her life since I had seen her before.

Just the other day I returned from a distant city. The afternoon before I left I had a few hours that were free, and so I decided to visit my old friend. When I called her on the telephone her voice came back with all the joy of a happy heart. "Come out and see us, and stay as long as you can."

"See us." Whatever could she mean?

No sooner did I alight at the walk that led to her door than I saw her waiting for me on the

broad veranda. She ran down the walk to greet me. How well I remembered the time she hid my hat, and then again when she smiled at me as she passed in the academic procession. If she was beautiful then, she was even more lovely now. There was a look of wonder in her eyes and her voice had in it something of the quiet that woos the world to peace. "If you have any chickens about the place, I want to chase them into the neighbor's yard," I said, as I remembered how she had run among my pets years before. Laughingly she replied that she did not keep such pets and that she was sure she never chased my chickens away from their breakfast. But she did have the most wonderful husband in all the world, and he was hurrying to have tea with us before I took the long ride upon the train back home. Then we talked of friends, and many things.

Soon she took me by the arm and led me into a quiet room. Hanging between two curved supports was a basket, all pink within and without. Gently did she turn the blanket down, and there, with a pout upon her face and with her fists doubled up, was a tiny baby girl. The miracle had happened. Life had flowed from the tiny girl of years before to another girl, just as small and just as wonderful. Now a woman, with all the love of a wife and mother in her heart, was smiling beside

me. Such love as hers alone can carry the burdens of the world and bear up in strength the growing souls of men.

The Saco and my friend! Are they not alike? Both took of the experiences of the day and sang to them, "Come with me and we will make more perfect music together." Now the Saco becomes part of the Atlantic and my friend is part of the wonder of God.

THE JACKKNIFE AND THE WRENCH

On one of my early birthdays my father gave me a new knife. It had two shining blades and a handle that was brown and polished. I never shall forget the thrill that was mine when I walked off to school with that jackknife in my pocket. Were there pencils to be sharpened that day? I was always ready with my knife. Were the big boys playing a game of ball and did they need someone to keep the score? There I was, willing and anxious to cut the notches on one of the boards of the old fence near the catcher's plate. Would I loan my knife? Yes, but I always wanted to keep my eye upon it wherever it went. A boy's thrill over a new knife is something to be remembered.

Among the older boys in our school there was one who always wanted his own way. His eye fell upon my knife. He asked me questions about it and after testing the back part of a blade on a nail suggested that the steel was not of the best.

That afternoon he came back to school in a very friendly manner. Of course, it always pleases the heart of a younger boy to have an older pay him attention. During the recess hour he took me

aside and showed me a wonderful wrench he was carrying in his pocket. Not only would it turn nuts both great and small, but it could be used as a hammer in driving in tacks and small nails. In fact, it was one of the most useful tools in all the world. I suspected that it came out of a bicycle kit but he said no, it was a wrench of a special kind. It was made of the best steel, and was the pride of the workmen of a far-away country.

I was not interested in his wrench but he evidently thought I ought to be. Upon several occasions during the period between recess and closing time I saw him doing odd things about his desk and twice about the schoolroom with that wrench. Always would his eyes seek me out and he would smile as he revealed to me the wonders of the tool he could carry in his pocket.

No sooner was school dismissed than he put his arm around my shoulders and walked with me towards home. There was a long row of sheds just back of the village church. One of these was a favorite play place of the boys and into this he tactfully led me. What did I say to giving him my knife for his wrench? He knew my father would appreciate the wrench and my mother would find it very useful around the home. In fact, if I had it in my pocket I would discover a hundred ways in which I could use it for my own benefit and the

benefit of my friends. As far as he knew, there was no other wrench like it in all the town.

I didn't want his wrench and I did want my knife. But, of course, I was pleased to have this older boy, the son of a prominent man in our town, take such interest in my welfare. Many were the arguments he used. A knife was just a knife. Many of the boys had knives and there was nothing out of the ordinary about that. But a wrench! That was something different. As I look back upon the argument now it seems to me that he convinced my head but surely he did not convince my heart. I hate to admit it but when we parted the knife was in his pocket and the wrench in mine.

All the way home I felt as though my best friend had departed. I showed the wrench to my mother, and she gave it only a passing glance. When my father came home I took it to him. He held it in his hand for a moment and then gave it back to me. Brokenly I told him the story of how I had swapped my knife for the wrench. Then I burst into tears. My parents were patient with me but I never have forgotten the lesson.

When I meet a man who wants to give me a thing of great value for something of mine that is of little value I always say to myself, "Remember the wrench, old man. All he wants is your knife."

THE LESSON OF THE RADIO

THE other day two friends invited me to their home to have dinner with them. As my two children were away with their mother at the camp beside the lake and I was all alone in a home that had echoes in it, of course I was glad to go. Then, these were two very dear friends, so my joy was all the greater. Especially happy am I now that I went because I learned a lesson that I want to share with all my friends. It came about through the after-dinner chat beside the radio. These friends of mine have a custom, and it is a pleasing one, of sitting beside their radio in the lovely sun room and visit to the accompaniment of what may be coming in on the unseen waves. Such music, if one is wise in his selection, may furnish a colorful background for an intimate hour. Often it is like the glow that fills the room and human hearts as conversation flows before the autumn fire.

Upon this day in particular we were talking about the fine quality of soul that was constantly being revealed to us through two mutual friends. We loved them and were rich in the knowledge that they loved us. But somehow my host was not

successful at first in finding the right radio program that would furnish the indefinable atmosphere for our mutual admiration of our friends. He turned the dial until we heard a familiar waltz played by a famous string quartet. The old master had put his soul into the music, and the modern musicians were interpreting his spirit with accuracy and charm. Yet somehow we felt as though the waltz, beautiful as it was, was an intruder into our friendly circle.

The next find was a man who was explaining an obscure passage of scripture to any who might be interested enough to listen in. Undoubtedly there were many who were in the mood to be informed concerning this difficult passage of God's word. On other occasions we should have been delighted to follow the leading of this particular biblical scholar. But today we were not in the frame of mind to be led in an intellectual discussion about authorship and texts. Our conversation was too intimate for that.

Just another turn, and we heard these words. "The score now stands, the Sox four and the Senators five." On ordinary occasions this would have held us. All three of us are fond of baseball, and I have cheered at two world series, as well as many other great games. But upon this day baseball did not create the atmosphere our hearts craved. So

another attempt was made to locate what we wanted most.

This time the result was wonderful and soul satisfying. A beautiful contralto voice floated into the room. It seemed as though a great-souled woman was just beside us, wooing us into sympathy and quiet as she sang a lullaby song. Here we found what we had been searching for. We smiled at each other, and all through this song and two others we visited, and listened, and dreamed. There was a freedom about our manner of carrying on that was altogether delightful. The lovely voice and the beautiful songs created the atmosphere out of which our souls merged in the wonder of friendship and the sense of life's goodness. All three of us felt something beyond our words and the knowledge of the ones we loved. When the notes of the last song died away my host turned off the radio and for a few moments we talked very quietly in the glow of the afternoon sun as it came streaming through the trees into their sun room. Then I bade them goodbye. I meditated as I walked in the warmth of that May afternoon. It seemed as though I had been in the presence of something more beautiful than I could describe even to my own heart.

There are times when I am all alone and thoughts

arise in my mind that are not helpful to the thing I want to do. It may be that I am trying to write a story for my children. But instead of doing that my mind will turn the dial and up will pop thoughts about a man who spoke to me in a sharp and critical manner. Unless I am careful that man and the harsh words will furnish a background that will make it impossible to write a story at all.

The other day I wanted to write a letter to a young friend who had come from a nearby town to tell me about something that was of vital interest to him. He told me a straightforward story. I just had learned that the story he told his own father was altogether a different one. Which story was true? As I began to write I said to myself, "I believe he did not mean to tell a falsehood. He was distressed and he took the easier way, that is all. I shall trust him and he will prove himself a man." Just then I touched the dial. In came the words, "But he did tell a lie. Can you trust him?" Do you know, it was very hard for me to write the letter I at first had upon my heart, as I listened to the words that came to me out of the unseen. What was I to do? I turned the dial back again until I heard the words, "Trust the good that is in the boy and he will be true to that." The more I listened to this voice the more sure I became that he

was worthy of my trust in him. How could he ever grow into a good man unless somebody trusted him?

Now when I see a boy who is angry because of what someone has said to him, I want to walk right up to him and say, "Turn the dial, my boy; you are listening in on the wrong station."

Often I overhear girls at their conversation. Usually it is bright and full of fun and above all things kindly. But once in a while there will creep in a note of criticism. Warm words of blame and often of anger will flow. Then I want to call out to them, "Change your wave length; you are fooling with one of the pirate sending outfits."

Oh my young friends, learn to manage your receiving sets. Begin today. Somewhere there is a sending station that is broadcasting just what you want to hear. When you tune in on this station it will help you do the thing that ought to be done at the time, and done well. Turn the dial until you can hear the voice of the announcer. Then the rest will take care of itself.

Since that afternoon with my two friends I have come to believe that what our world needs is to learn the lesson I learned from the radio and the beautiful contralto voice and the soul-quieting lullaby song.

OPENING THE GATES

THE Pilgrims had been long upon the way. By many a camp fire had they said, "Tomorrow night we shall be one day's march nearer the city of our heart's desire." Often when they rested in the shade at noonday some would say, "Before the dew falls this evening we shall have gone beyond the river and the low hills and be nearer the homes that are awaiting us all." There had been hours when they were weary with their journeyings and discouraged with the great distances that stretched away between them and the hope of all their hearts. Then they would gird up their loins again and start forth with renewed courage. Oh the joy that would be theirs when they heard a voice say, "Welcome to the city. Enter and be at home."

Now the distances had been mastered. The mountain ranges were all behind them. What mattered blistered feet when the march was ended? The last river had been crossed. Why should they remember with fear the perils of swollen streams and rapid currents? The last long mile of dusty way had been traversed. Who would be so foolish as to regret the choking days of desert sand and the

burning hours when no water was to be had? Straight before them was the city, league upon league of marble beauty. Like a crown it sat upon the hills and came down to the shining road that led to the very gates. Oh, the gladness of weary Pilgrims who see for the first time the beautiful city towards which they have been journeying for long and weary days!

They were to camp but one more night upon the way. Tomorrow they would be astir at daybreak and well on towards the gates when the sun was up. Some of the children went to sleep in the early part of the night, but there were many who could not sleep at all. Voices were heard before dawn and when the light broke in the east they were ready for the last march. The Pilgrims would find home before sunset. Their hearts leaped as they saw the towers shining in the morning sunlight. The songs they sang as they journeyed were the ones they had sung at home when they gave thanks to God for His goodness. Long before noon they had followed the way clear to the city wall and were resting before the beautiful gates.

Here the older men held counsel. Then they went forward and rapped lightly upon the iron lock. Everyone was silent as they waited for the gates to open and someone to bid them welcome. All was as still as a forest dell. Soon they knocked

again, more loudly than before. The gates never budged upon their hinges and no voice called out to the Pilgrims from beyond the walls. Then the men hammered upon the gates. Some were startled at the noise they made and a few heard the echoes of their hammerings come up from the river below. After that all was as silent as at noonday when the sun is hot in the fields and no bird sings.

Whatever were they to do? Had they made a mistake after all, and journeyed along the wrong way? Was the city deserted? Would the gates never open? The walls were too high to scale. Not a sound came from the streets within. The Pilgrims were weary and discouraged. They could not forget the hopes of the long marches and the dreams by the campfires.

Just then the older men made a discovery. They should have seen it before, but owing to their haste they had overlooked a very important thing. Hanging on one of the gates, close by the great handle, was a sign, printed so that all might read.

THE CITY IS THE REWARD OF ALL EARTH'S PILGRIMS. YOU ARE WELCOME AND YOUR HOME UPON A BEAUTIFUL STREET AWAITS YOU. BUT ONLY THEY MAY ENTER WHO FIRST LEARN HOW TO OPEN THE GATES.

No sooner had the older men read the sign than they again counseled together. After much discussion a light broke across their faces. Then they called the locksmith to help them open the gates. He took with him all the keys to the strongboxes that had been carried with them upon their pilgrimage. None of these would fit the lock. Then he opened his tool kit and set to work in earnest. The sound of his tappings and scrapings could be heard by the eager Pilgrims. The older men looked expectant. Then they became anxious. "I never saw such a lock. I have done all I could and I can not move the bolt," said the locksmith.

The Pilgrims were disheartened and the older men talked long and seriously about what they should do next. "Send for the blacksmith," said one of them. "He is a clever fellow and he will know what to do."

So the blacksmith came. His arms were strong and his eyes were keen. Well did the children know him. Had they not seen him shoeing the horses and mending the wagons that had broken down along the way? The sound of his hammer and the glow of the forge were a delight to them. His voice was as merry as a laughing brook. He took his hammers, both great and small, with his tongs and files, and laid them beside the gate. Then he studied the

lock and looked wise as he spoke low words to the older men.

It was not long before the great blows of his hammer and the rasping of his file sounded out to all the Pilgrims. They waited in hope. For over an hour did the blacksmith hammer and file and work at his task. The gates seemed to tremble, but they never budged upon their hinges. The silence between the blows was broken by the sobs and the prayers of the Pilgrims. The echoes of his hammer came back like hollow sounds from the river below and the hills beyond. The older men shook their heads in disappointment. What were they to do? Was the beautiful city only a city of marble with gates that would not open?

Just then an impatient fellow rushed up to the gates and spoke quick words to the older men. They listened and several of them shook their heads.

"No, it will never do," said one of them.

"What else can you suggest?" replied the impatient one.

"It will do no harm to try it," another said.

"Why fool away more time?" called the impatient one.

"Perhaps he is right," said still another.

"It soon will be night," wailed an old man.

"We have a right to do our utmost," spoke one of the wisest. So after much talk they called for the ten strongest men among the Pilgrims. Soon they were selected from among the younger men. The elders sent them to a wood near by and as they went several carried axes upon their shoulders. Ere long the sound of chopping could be heard and then the crash of a falling tree. After that the blows of many axes came to the Pilgrims as they wondered and waited.

Then the waiting Pilgrims saw the ten strong men come out from among the trees carrying a stout log. This they took straight to the gates and laid it down upon the way. Then they held a conference with the older men who were waiting for them. After many words and much looking at the lock, everybody saw what was to be done. The ten strong men lifted the stout log and pointed it towards the gates. Then they walked backwards for a few steps and stopped. At a word from one of the elders they rushed straight for the gates and the end of the log struck the lock just where the bolt passed from one gate to the other. The sound was that of a mighty crash. Everyone held his breath. The older men leaned forward, and one of them fell to the ground. The echoes of the crash could be heard coming up from the river and the hills beyond. But the gates never budged upon their

hinges. Again and again the ten strong men were urged on by their older comrades until crash after crash echoed far among the hills. Other men united their strength with that of the ten and it seemed as though the gates must be broken. Instead the log was splintered and the strong men fell to the ground with their weariness and disappointment.

No one knew what to do next. The older men were at their wits' end. They fell back from the gates to rest and to think upon their plans. A few said, "We must pray."

Others moaned, "We have been misled. Our guide has deceived us."

Some called, "Let us return the way we came. Surely we can live in the land we left."

A perfect babel of voices followed. But among them could be heard such words as these;

"The city is deserted."

"We are fools to think that we ever could reach our heart's desire."

"Let us curse the city and die."

While the Pilgrims were thus talking and sorrowing, two of the children, weary with all the fuss about the gates, wandered into a little field close to the way. Here they gathered daisies and wove them into a lovely chain. The boy placed the chain lightly around the girl's neck. Then he said to her, as he remembered an old story, "This daisy chain

is my gift to my queen. May it ever bind her to things as lovely as herself." As she laughed they took hold of hands and ran through the field, with their hair and the daisy chain flying in the wind.

Of course, no one paid any particular attention to them. Everybody was crushed with disappointment that they could not enter the city. But the girl's mother was watching them, and the boy's father saw them out of the corner of his eye. For a moment these parents forgot their disappointment in love for their children. Youth always makes age forget its sorrow. Who could cry over gates that would not open when his own child was laughing in a field of daisies and running to and fro before his very eyes?

Soon one of the older men saw the children. He called the attention of others to them. Some appeared to be disturbed that there should be games and laughter when others were in despair because they could not enter the city. They called to the children, "Come back here, at once. Be quiet while your elders pray." When the children ran almost to the gates several shouted to them all at once. But the wind was in the wrong direction and the children were laughing as they ran. If they heard the shouting at all they never dreamed it was intended for them.

Then they ran to the very gate. The boy laugh-

ingly called to the girl, "Come, my queen. I will lift you up to the latch while you open the gates for me." With that he stood upon the splintered log and lifted her gaily towards the lock. She let one hand rest upon his shoulder and with the other reached up until she touched, ever so lightly, the iron handle. There was the sound of a slipping bolt. The great gates swung wide open. Before them was a winding street that led away to green parks bordered with beautiful homes beneath shady trees. The Pilgrims fell to their knees in gratitude. The way was open to the city of their hearts' desire. Just inside the wall, with wonder on their faces, they saw a boy and a girl, holding a daisy chain between them, and their hair was flying in the wind.

THE TWO GOATS

News had gone out to the goats in all the regions roundabout that they were to elect a new king. The old king of the goats had died and now there must be someone to take his place. The election was to be held in a great valley where the mountains towered up on every side. Early that morning you could have heard the patter of many feet as the goats came from far and near to take part in the election. Some came alone, some two by two, and others in groups both large and small.

There were many who felt that old Crookedhorn should be made king. Did he not have a commanding voice and was he not distinguished in his appearance? Others said that the election should go to young Scarface. Did he not have the years before him and would he not bring honor to all the goats?

At last when they all were assembled, the goat who had been the counsellor of the old king stood upon a great rock and, pawing with his foot, called them to order. When the voting was over many were surprised, but everybody was happy. They had elected old Smuttyface king. The goats all

knew him and they felt he would be fair upon all occasions. When the election was over, of course they broke up into smaller groups and began to talk with each other.

Two young goats, Fleetfoot and Sharpeye, were seen to be busily engaged in conversation. They were arguing about old Baldy, the mountain on which they both lived. Fleetfoot said, "My, but isn't old Baldy rough and rugged? Sometimes it is hard for me to get around from tuft of grass to tuft of grass."

Sharpeye replied, "Rugged nothing. It is smooth with plenty of open spaces where one may feed under the trees."

They argued about it and about until the goats near at hand could see that they were becoming angry over the matter. Even the excitement over the election of a new king did not stop them. Soon they locked their horns in what promised to be a fight had not Strongheart, a friend of every goat from all around, interfered. He shamed them, and told them how foolish it was to quarrel over matters like that. As they turned their backs upon each other, Fleetfoot said, "Some day I will meet you on the hills, and then we'll see."

Sharpeye replied, "Let that day be tomorrow and we will settle it before sunset."

A number of days later old Smuttyface, the

new king, sent Strongheart upon an errand to all the goats on the mountains. "Tell them we must live in peace and friendship," he said. "Let them bring their quarrels to me and I am sure we shall find that all can be settled in fairness for every goat in all the kingdom." So Strongheart went from valley to crag, and visited all of the goats in the far places. Not only were they glad to see him but their hearts warmed as they heard the message from their king.

At last he came to old Baldy and made his way cautiously among the rough places, following the brook that leaped its way down the mountainside. He was musing happily to himself when almost at the top he spied something white just at the foot of a cliff. Upon a nearer approach he discovered Fleetfoot and Sharpeye locked horn in horn, both dead after a long and bitter fight. Then Strongheart remembered the argument on the day they elected the king, and his heart was heavy.

Taking a few more leaps he stood on the mountain top. Behind him was the rugged landscape that Fleetfoot had known, with tufts of grass growing here and there at the base of rocks and around the roots of trees. On the other side was the smooth and gentle pasture land sloping away towards the valley. He shook his head sadly as he said, "How foolish these goats have been. Both were

right and neither could understand. Ay, they are as foolish almost as men I have known who wrangle about things that do not matter and quarrel when more understanding would show that they both were right."

THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS

It had been one of those sultry days in summer when it is always hard for children to be happy. All the forenoon they had tried various things and still they were cross at each other and none of them knew what to do. The weather was too warm to play tag; the wagon seemed to be too heavy to drag across the lawn; even hide-and-go-seek in the house, a game that hardly ever failed to bring laughter to their lips, was spurned by them all. At last they turned to Mother for help. "What shall we do, Mother, in order that the hours may pass until it is cooler this evening?"

Mother was busy with her work. There was not time for her to worry about the weather. So she said to the children, "I want you all to help me. There is something hidden about the house and if you will find it the weather will not trouble you at all. There is a package of happiness for every one of you. Go and search for it."

What a strange idea that was! Could it be true that there was such a package for every child, and all in the house? They asked their mother many questions, but she only smiled in reply as she bade them hurry or it would be too late.

Howard began his search by going up into the attic. There were boxes of old books and trunks of clothes that had been worn by people who were old. Queer chairs and odd bits of furniture were scattered about, and many curious things were hanging from the great rafters. He searched everywhere, or thought he did, but search as he would he could not find the package. At last he said, "How silly! I am going to give up my search and go out on the veranda and keep cool."

Bess went into the library. She loved books and she knew that happiness must be there. She spied "Alice in Wonderland" but soon tossed it aside. Book after book she took down off the shelves and looked them through, but not one of them satisfied her. She peeped on the top of the high shelves and looked in back of the great books on the bottom shelves. At last she, too, gave up, saying, "If there is a package of happiness in this room with my name on it I surely can not find it. It must be that mother is mistaken." With that she threw herself on the great couch saying, "If I can be very still perhaps I can forget the weather."

Alfred went out upon the lawn. He hunted around the veranda, across the lawn to the garage, and even looked under the cushions of the car. There was apparently no package of happiness behind the hose or beside the lawnmower. The sun

beat upon him and he, too, gave up in discouragement. "I never heard mother talk so foolishly before."

Marion started for the parlor. On her way through the music room she discovered that the piano had not been dusted. "I will help Mother a bit and then search for the package of happiness." No sooner was the piano finished than she saw that all the furniture in the room needed to be dusted. Singing a merry song to help pass away the time, she went from chair to table and so on into the parlor. By the time she had finished in the parlor she had forgotten about the weather and also the search for the package of happiness. Had you been in the kitchen you could have heard her say, "Mother dear, let me help you get supper, please, and we will visit together about the new dress I am going to have for graduation day." Before she knew it supper was ready and Mother sent her to call the other children.

When they were at the table Mother asked them, "Have any of you found your package of happiness?"

Howard was the first to answer. "Happiness, indeed! Mighty little of it around this house on a day like this. I looked, but what's the use?"

Bess curled her lips as she spoke with much feeling. "I looked for a while but the only happiness

I could find was trying to keep cool in the library, and even there the heat was enough to stifle me. Anyone is welcome to any happiness they can find with my name on it."

Alfred agreed with Howard and Bess. "Do you think there is any happiness on the lawn and out in the garage or anywhere about the house? I searched and I couldn't find it. I guess you tried to bluff us, Mother."

Then Mother turned to Marion. "And you, my dear, did you find the package of happiness?"

It is Marion's answer that has in it all of the wisdom of the ages. "Oh, Mother, I started to find my package of happiness but thought I would dust the piano first. Then, before I knew it, you and I were having the loveliest visit about school and my new dress and graduation day. I guess I must have found the happiness that had my name on it. I didn't think about it at the time but now I know that I have been happy all this sultry afternoon."

STANDING ON UNSEEN SHOULDERS

"THERE, see what I just did." It was a happy voice that called out to the older ones in the room. Everybody turned and looked. Surely enough something had been done and it was worthy of being looked at and talked about. A ten-year-old girl had succeeded in drawing the likeness of a great old cathedral. The tinting of the stone and coloring of the glass in the windows made it look like the original painting that was hanging upon the wall. Everybody exclaimed at the picture and a few said, "And you are only ten years old!"

The girl was very proud. The more the people talked about the drawing and the coloring, the more boastful she became. "I did it, all by myself." "No one helped me." "Not even Mother knew about it until I showed it to her, just now."

Of course, such pride may lead to unhappy things. Father thought it was time to teach his girl a lesson. So he said, "How wonderful that you could do it all by yourself. When did you make the pencils and paints you used?"

"Why, Father! Of course I did not make them. How silly!"

"Oh, then you really did have help, didn't you? But surely you made the paper upon which you drew your lines and spread your colors?"

"Why, no; you bought the paper for me only the other day. Don't you remember?"

"Oh, yes, so I did. But the picture you copied. Did you paint that, all alone?"

"Why, the picture has been on the wall ever since I can remember. I don't know who painted that."

"Oh well, then, you really did have a lot of help, didn't you? But who do you suppose planned the cathedral and what were the names of the men who dug in the ground and cut the stone and climbed high up on the great spires when the cathderal was building? Did you do that?"

The girl was beginning to feel that she had not done her painting all alone, after all. Indeed, she knew that her boast had been a very silly one.

Is it not well for us all to remember that? Every boy stands upon the shoulders of his parents, and his father and mother stand upon the shoulders of their fathers and mothers. So you stood upon the shoulders of someone when you stood up and sang so beautifully this morning. Who taught you the song? Who played the organ? Did you write the words or the music?

Whenever I hear a boy brag and say, "Look at

me. I did this, all alone," I want to say, "Wait a moment and listen to the story of the painting on the wall." If I hear a girl boast about how well she can paint or sing, I am tempted to call out, "Did you ever hear of the girl who had no help when she painted the cathedral?"

Without the help of the ones who have gone before us we could neither paint nor live.

THE RECEPTION

It would seem as though bad luck had come to the children. They were invited to the reception and they did not want to go. Had it been a party, of course it would have been different. But a reception!

"They are so stiff and starchy at receptions," Maude exclaimed. "Who wants to spend an hour smiling sweetly at old ladies, and bow and curtsy here and there when you are introduced to grown-ups?"

Paul was just as emphatic. "It is no place for a boy. They stand around first on one foot and then on the other, and talk about things nobody is interested in. I always feel like a stick at such places. Do I have to go?"

Lillian was indignant. "The very idea! And I wanted to read all the afternoon. Imagine me standing as straight as an arrow and trying to be pleasant to people I shall never see again, and some whom I do not like. Why should they ever spoil my day by asking me to their old reception?"

Joan had a mingled feeling. She didn't want to give the afternoon, and yet there was a bit of

vanity in her make-up. "Oh, I suppose they'll want me to play the piano and perhaps sing to them. But then, they wouldn't appreciate it anyway. What do they know about voice culture and music except Auld Lang Syne and some such things as that?"

Sam didn't see why they had to fuss so much. "Let's go and see what's going on," he said. They all laughed and exclaimed, "Don't you expect too much. They serve small dishes of ice cream and only one of them." Sam had a reputation for liking things to eat. The only difference between Sam and the others was that Sam was honest enough to admit it.

Well, the afternoon passed somehow, and the children came home. Father overheard their conversation.

"Did you ever see such dresses as those ladies wore?" Maude exclaimed. "I thought I should die laughing at old Mrs. Frump when she bowed and smiled to everyone who came her way."

Paul had a complaint all his own. "Not a soul spoke to me except when they were introduced. I was bored to death. When I get to be a man if we have to have receptions there will be some pep in them, you had better bet."

Lillian was still angry. "Did you ever see such

musty cake and such small servings of ice cream? And then they only passed the candy once."

Joan had not been asked to sing but she did say, "Did you ever hear such a voice as that Miss Sharp had? My, she must have learned to sing before Noah was born. She couldn't even control her breath. Not a bit of style to her."

Then someone exclaimed, "Where's Sam?"

"Oh, Sam? We left him talking with that woman from Brazil."

After a while Sam came home. How they fired the questions at him. "Where have you been, Sam?" "Wasn't the reception great?" "Did the lady from Brazil tell you about the nuts that grow in trees in her country?" But such questions didn't trouble Sam any. This is what had happened to him.

"Well, on my way out I met that jolly lady from Brazil. She is Mrs. Dobbs' sister. I asked her how she liked that country and how she came back to America. She told me all about the boat, and the boys in her land. Then I told her about our ball team. She led me out into the kitchen and, do you know, she gave me all the ice cream I wanted and urged me to have some more. My! but they've got the finest kitchen you ever did see. I helped the maid a little with some of the dishes and then Mrs. Dobbs came out and asked me to stay to supper.

I thought I had better not do that, but their chauffeur did show me their brand new car. You know receptions aren't half bad and I'm ready to go to another any time."

Father couldn't wait any longer. Here was his chance to say something to the children. "There! There you are. Sam has taught you all a lesson. Every one of you expected to find something grumpy and stiff, and you did. Sam went to have a good time, and he had it. I wish you all were as wise as Sam."

BEAUTIFUL HANDS

"Look at my hands," said Hortense. "My mother says they are the most beautiful hands she ever saw. All my aunts think they are beautiful, too. Do you not see how long my fingers are, and that the nails are as pink as the seashell upon the mantel over the fireplace? Every morning my mother has me bathe them in the dew that falls upon the grass beside the garden walk. Then at night I put soft cream upon them and they grow more beautiful while I sleep. Some day I am going to play the piano before many people at grand concerts, and they will marvel at my hands. I never have to touch anything that is rough or coarse, because my father is rich and he can afford to give me a maid. My hands are the most beautiful ones in our school."

As Hortense ceased speaking she folded her hands in plain sight of all the girls. Her slender fingers looked like pale wax as she held them where all might admire their beauty. Upon her proud face there was a smile that seemed to say, "I know you all must envy me."

Before any of the other girls could reply she

continued, "Everybody knows that beautiful hands are a sign of blue blood and fine breeding. All my people have been well bred and I am glad that I bear an honored name."

As she finished, Hortense's eyes shone with a brightness that was as cold as moonlight upon a bank of snow.

Of course no group of girls was going to permit Hortense to talk like that without someone saying something equally grand. "Yes, your hands may be beautiful, in their way," replied Eva. "But they have no color. You girls just look at her fingers. Who ever would suppose they were upon a young girl's hands? They are shaped fairly well, but they are too long. They may be nimble upon the piano keys, and from what Miss Sharp says she does play very well. But hands, to be beautiful, must have color and warmth."

At this Hortense tilted her delicate nose just a bit and a haughty look came into her face.

"Now just look at my hands, for instance," continued Eva as she spread them upon her knees. "My fingers are shorter and there is color and warmth in every one of them. My drawing teacher told me she never saw a hand that showed so much real genius for artistic work as mine. Art, my teacher says, must have the glow of real life about it. My hands are all alive with the very thing that makes

for beauty and color. My mother has me crush roses in my hands every day, for she read in an old book that queens used to keep their hands beautiful with the juice of crushed rose leaves."

As Eva talked she held her hands in the different positions the teacher had taught her to hold the pencil and the paper when she drew a landscape or an old house. There was a sound in her voice that meant, "I am well pleased with my own hands and I am sure you all agree with me."

Before Hortense could reply or any of the other girls could find words to agree or disagree, Eva continued, "I am very glad that I do not have to dust or wash the dishes at home, because that would ruin my hands for my life's work. Back somewhere in my family, before we ever left England, there was an artist. I resemble him and my mother says, 'Keep your hands beautiful, my dear, and some day you will be like your ancestor who painted a picture for the queen.' Hands to be beautiful must have color, and mine are the loveliest in school."

As Eva finished, she let her hands rest idly in her lap. Between the forefinger and thumb of her right hand she held, ever so delicately, a golden pencil that her aunt had given her just the day before.

Lenore was uneasy and she could hardly wait

until Eva had finished. Before any of the others could reply she spoke with a certain note of disdain in her voice.

"You girls are very proud of your hands, and indeed they are pretty. We all will admit that. I agree with Eva that Hortense's fingers are too long and they lack color. If she is not careful, the joints will soon be so large that they will ruin the looks of her fingers entirely. Even now you can notice how the fingers taper up to the joint and then away again."

Hortense's face took on a pained expression at that and she began to toy with the folds of a silken scarf that was hanging over her shoulders. But before she could defend her fingers Lenore continued.

"Of course Eva's hands do have a certain amount of color, but her wrists are too large for her hands. My drawing teacher tells me that one's wrists are as important in drawing as are the fingers. Now Eva's wrists are large and they do not shape well into her hands. If you look you all will see that her hands are too small for her wrists and to be beautiful hands and wrists must fit perfectly together."

Eva resented this. True, her wrists were plump but no one ever had said anything like that to her before. She would ask her teacher the very next time she had a lesson, if what Lenore said was true.

"Now look at my hands," Lenore continued, as she laid them upon the velvet covering of the table before her. "My fingers are not as long as Hortense's, but longer than Eva's, with fully as much color. The nails are finer in texture than either Hortense's or Eva's. My wrist is slender and the lines from my wrists to my thumb and fingers are perfect. The whole appearance of hand and wrist is as near perfection as you ever saw. My teacher tells me that I must guard them well, because I am going to be an actress and everybody knows that upon the stage beautiful hands are as important as a beautiful face. My father sends to Paris for the finest lotion for me, and I am sure you will agree with me that when all is considered mine are the most beautiful hands in school."

Hortense and Eva were ready to talk again, and several of the other girls were eager to speak. But before any of them could find words they all were held by the clear, gentle voice of a lady who had been listening to the conversation in the long living room of the girls' finishing school. No one had paid any attention to her as she quietly had come among them. Everybody knew her. Indeed, she was a famous artist whose pictures had hung in the galleries of great cities. She and the preceptress had gone to school together and now she was spending a few days with her old friend. All the girls ad-

mired her greatly and twice she had talked to them about art and great painters. Wherever she went she carried a quiet charm and whenever she spoke everybody listened and knew that what she said was full of wisdom.

"I have been interested in beautiful hands for many years. Some people say I am an expert in judging what and where the real beauty lies."

At that the girls were full of interest. Would she tell them what she knew about fingers and wrists and color? Yes, she would tell them. Hortense looked confident and Eva's face had much hope in it while Lenore was half afraid to listen to what the lady would say.

"Girls, beautiful hands are something that everybody loves to see. But not everybody can see deeply enough to discover the real beauty. Jean, will you please come and sit beside me?"

Now Jean was the daughter of the laundress. Her mother had four children and her father had to sit at home in a chair all day because of an illness that had made him a cripple. Jean could not go to the finishing school and often she found it hard to be free to study the lessons that had to be learned in the day school. Sometimes when she carried the freshly washed and ironed clothes to the finishing school the girls would speak to her. Once in a while she would listen to their jolly conversa-

tion before she hurried home to help her mother or to carry a glass of water to her father. Today she had heard the conversation about beautiful hands. Her own hands were red and rough, so she kept them behind her as she looked and listened.

When the lady called to Jean she began to edge away from the group. "Please come, Jean." She could not say "No" to such an invitation, so she blushingly came and sat upon a hassock at the lady's side.

"Girls," said the lady, "to see beauty you must look deep. All artists know that. When I look at Hortense's hands I see slender fingers and pink nails and piano keys and morning dew. That is all. When I look at Eva's hands I behold fingers that have color and warmth, a drawing pencil, a pad of paper, crushed rose leaves, and nothing more. When I look at Lenore's hands I observe shapely wrists, regular lines, dramatic curves and sweet smelling lotion from Paris. When I look deeper I discover but little of interest.

"Now, Jean, show us your hands." Jean held them back, but the lady took them gently in her own and smoothed them out upon her knees.

"When I look at Jean's hands, what do I see? At first they look red and rough. Then I see that they are stout and hard. As I look more deeply what do I behold? A mother who smiles because

Jean's hands help her when she is tired. A father's look of joy when Jean returns from school, for then he can have his chair turned towards the western window. A little sister who laughs when Jean comes, because then she will have her bread and milk and be made ready for bed. The longer I look at Jean's hands the more happiness I see in the faces of others and the more beautiful her hands become.

"When I look at the hands of girls who never helped to bear the loads of others, I see merely fingers and wrists that may be pretty to the eyes but that have no real beauty at all. When I look at hands that are rough and hard with helping others, I see the most beautiful things in the world. Helping hands are beautiful hands, because they bring beauty into other lives and bringers of beauty always are beautiful."

Then the lady put her arm around Jean and together they went out into the hall. When the door closed behind them and the girls tried to talk, it seemed as though the room was full of echoes.

THE BIG BLUFF

Did you ever hear of a big bluff? A bluff is a person who believes one thing and who pretends to believe another thing. A big bluff shows off while he is pretending. There are a lot of bluffs in the world and once in a while you will meet a big bluff. When you do, just smile as you pass by, and pay no more attention to him. His great delight is in shocking you. But why be shocked by a mere pretender?

Horace was a big bluff. Let me tell you about him. He was wearing his first pair of long trousers. Of course that made him quite a man. You didn't have to tell him so, because he knew it already. In fact, Horace would have told you all about his importance and the worth of his ideas, had you been willing to listen. There were times when he really believed the things he said. But on the whole he talked just to hear his voice and to feel the glow of using big words about himself. All the older folks understood about him. Some were heard to say, "He will outgrow it in time." The children found him out, too. Really, big bluffs always make themselves look silly, sooner or later. Just how Edna

found out that Horace was a big bluff is an interesting story.

It was Christmas Eve and the children were following the happy way at Grandfather's and Grandmother's. Long had it been the custom for the children to spend Christmas Eve at the home of their grandparents. Then on Christmas morning the fathers and mothers would come to spend the day at their old home. It was such a happy custom. Grandfather and Grandmother were as jolly as any two children ever could be. They would tell stories about what Father and Mother did when they were young, and often the children would play with the toys that had been given to their parents years and years ago. Do you not wish you were there, now, listening to the merry voice of Grandfather as he tells about the wild ride on the bob-sled down the long hill, and the upset in the snowbank right by the old stump fence?

On this particular Eve the children were sitting around the fire and telling stories. There was not a wink of sleep in a single eye. The conversation was carried on by everybody and there were times when they all talked together. But of course no one minded that in the least. Did they not know that before long there would be one subject that would hold the interest of them all? Christmas and Santa Claus and hanging stockings were just ahead

of them. The youngest could hardly wait until the time came when they would listen to Grandfather as he read the Christmas story from an old book. Then the conversation would flow about presents and the reindeer and the long rides over the snow. Here is where Horace proved himself a big bluff.

"Huh!" he said. "Of course there isn't any Santa Claus. That is stuff for kids." A troubled look crossed the faces of Grandfather and Grandmother. The children were shocked.

Edna was the first to recover from such a foolish statement. "Why, Horace, of course there is a Santa Claus. Last year I wrote him a letter and asked him to bring me a doll. On Christmas morning just the doll I wanted was in my stocking."

Horace shrugged his shoulders and replied, "Yes, yes, little one, I know. Did your mother see that letter?" Just like that.

Harry could not keep silent in the face of such nonsense. "There must be a Santa Claus. Last year he called me on the telephone and asked me what I wanted for Christmas. I asked for a pair of skates and he brought them just as he said he would."

"Oh, I see," was Horace's wise remark. "Where was your father when you were talking with Santa Claus?" That is the kind of boy Horace was.

Mildred said that she had received a letter from him, just the other day. If Horace would wait un-

til morning he would see that Santa Claus was a man who kept his word. Would Horace wait?

Oh, yes, Horace would be there in the morning, all right. "Where was the letter mailed?" Such a bluff I never did see before.

Bud could hardly keep back the tears. "Who is it that brings all the presents to boys and girls, if it is not Santa Claus?"

Even in answer to a question like that Horace was bound to show everybody that he had a wise head upon his shoulders. "You have not bought any presents for anybody this year, have you, Bud? Have you bought a single present yourself?"

Oh, such a babel of words as followed. Everybody wanted to talk at once. Horace sat in his chair with a wise look upon his face. Were they not mere children, infants almost? Why should he bother with them any more? Surely a boy with long trousers can not expect to be understood by a lot of youngsters like that. No one knows what might have been said had not Grandfather thought it time to stop all such silly talk. So he looked sharply at Horace and began to tell about the bob-sled ride they were to have tomorrow. Already there was plenty of straw in the sled and the bells were hanging on the pins back of the stalls where the horses were.

Tonight, of course, they could sit up past their

usual bedtime. But all times come to an end and at last Grandmother called, "Now you all must get ready to hang your stockings." It long had been the custom at Grandfather's home for all the children to hang their stockings in a row over the fireplace. Off they scurried up the stairs, with Grandmother among them. Such shoutings you never heard before. As soon as everyone was ready Grandmother said, "You may go now," and down they came, whooping and frolicking as loudly as ever they wished. Each child carried his stocking and a pin in his hands.

All of a sudden Edna looked at Horace. "Why, Horace! I thought you didn't believe in Santa Claus?"

What do you suppose had happened? When Horace put on long trousers he did what boys always do; he also put on short stockings. Instead of bringing down his own stocking to hang with the others, he had borrowed one of Grandmother and asked for the largest one she had.

The big bluff!

THE OLD ROSEBUSH

In a far-away land a woman had four stalwart sons. Well had she loved them as mothers always do, and well had she trained them until they were a joy to her heart. But it was a poor land, and the sons wanted to get on in the world. One night they talked together until almost daybreak. They came to the conclusion that they must go to a rich land beyond the seas where they could make money and fame for themselves. In the morning they told their mother of their decision. Then they said, "And you are to come with us, Mother dear, and we will give you a lovely home and dress you in silks and satins in the land to which we go."

The mother looked at them for a moment and replied, "My boys, I am not surprised at what you tell me. Your father wanted to go, but he was the oldest of his family and so he had to stay. Now I know he will be happy, even as I am happy, to have you go into a larger world. But as for me, I will give you my answer tomorrow."

When the morrow came the sons called their mother and spoke tenderly to her. "Now, Mother, we want to leave in the weeks that are just before

the summer. Will you make ready to go with us?"

The mother looked at them, one after the other, before she gave her answer. "Boys, I always have lived in this little land, and your father is buried close to his father in the yard just back of the village church. My heart is here and I love these hills. I shall think of you in the new land. Send me letters when you are away but let me stay here and dream of you as you make your fortunes and your fame. Some day, perhaps, you will return to visit me; but as for me I cannot go."

The boys knew that the mother's words were final. With sadness in their hearts they made ready for their journey over the sea. When the morning of their departure came the mother, with sweet peace in her eyes, gave each of her boys a package before she kissed them goodbye. "My sons, these little parcels contain roots of the old rosebush which your father planted years ago here by the door of our home. Ever since you can remember, when June came you have helped me gather roses from this old bush. During all the years since your father went away they have been to us as fragrant memories of his love. Whenever you make your home in the new land, plant the old rosebush by the door. When the roses bloom let their fragrance bring thoughts of your old home and the days with your father and mother."

The boys kissed their mother goodbye. With hearts that overflowed with the happiness of a great love they went upon their journey to the land beyond the sea.

Upon arriving in the new land the first son went to a place in the far west. He planted the root of the old rosebush and said, "As soon as I have a home of my own I shall dig it up and replant it by the door." Hard did he work as men learned his worth and gave him positions of leadership and trust. After the years he had made much money. Then his heart was glad because he had his own home. He remembered the old rosebush and went in order that he might bring a root to plant by his own front step. In the years that had gone he had not seen the bush and there were other rosebushes growing around it. For the life of him he could not tell which his mother had given him years before. So he went away with disappointment in his heart. Soon was he busy with other things and after a while the rosebush was no more in his mind.

The second son kept the package in his trunk. He said to himself as he saw it from time to time, "I shall plant the old root on that happy day when I have a home of my own." It was long before that day came. He lived where there was plenty of ground and he might have seen it growing, had he wished. "Some day," he said to himself.

At last the day dawned when he and another had a cottage all their own just back from a village street. Then he remembered the fragrance of the roses as he had picked them from over the doorway of the home where he had dwelt as a boy. He found the package in his old trunk. The root had withered and fallen almost into dust. This he planted tenderly, but there was no life left to grow. Could you pass his cottage on a day in June you would find roses blooming in the garden, and lovely hollyhocks growing along the wall. But over the door there would be never the sign of a rosebush.

The third son, upon reaching the new land, went to work at once for a rich man who owned a beautiful garden. He took the root to the gardener and said, "This is an old fashioned rosebush that grew at my mother's doorway at home. Plant it and tend it, and I will pay you money. When the time comes and I have a home of my own, I shall want it to grow over the door that the roses may remind me of my mother who lives far over the sea."

He did not work long for the rich man but went away to a distant place, and then to a city still farther on. Being patient and always faithful to his new tasks, men came to trust him, and soon he was placed in positions of honor. Money came to his hand, and one lovely day a beautiful young

woman said she would share his home with him. No sooner was everything in readiness than he remembered the rosebush that grew by his mother's door. He wrote to the old gardener to have him send the roots of the rosebush that he knew had been growing in the rich man's garden close by the city. Soon a letter came back saying that the old gardener was dead. The new gardener did not know whether the old rosebush had been destroyed, or had been transplanted to another section of the garden. Disappointment entered into the heart of the man and it was long before he could forget.

The fourth son, the youngest of them all, went to work for a man who owned a great farm. He asked permission to plant his rose root in a little plot of ground near where two walls ran together. Here it was sheltered from the wind and the warm sun came streaming in. He tended the rosebush in his spare moments and kept back the weeds and the long grass. After a while he saw it growing, sturdy and strong, above the ground. It was not long before roses grew upon the bush and he built a trellis where it might climb even as it climbed at home.

Being faithful in all his work he prospered. When he found the maiden he could love, he asked her to be his wife, and she was happy to go with him and keep his home. It was only a cottage with a lawn in front and a great plot of ground stretching

back of it to the woods. With loving hand they transplanted the rosebush close to their own front step. There it grew, and could you pass upon a June evening you would see the lovely roses hanging over the door and smell the fragrance of them as you went upon your way.

One day after the years word came to the four boys from their mother. She had grown old and was wishing for some special message of love from them. Her friends wrote that ere long she would be resting with their father in the yard just back of the village church.

The first son, who had grown rich, sent his mother a letter. In it there was money enough to make it possible for her to have a companion who would care for her in her last days. When the letter was read to his mother and she saw the money and knew that she would not want, she smiled and said, "My oldest boy has not forgotten his mother." And yet the watchers by the bedside knew there was something that money could not buy.

The second son also wrote a letter to his mother and told her how well he loved her. If he had time he would make a journey to see her before she went away. When this letter was read to her she murmured, "How beautiful is the love of a son, and what would I not give if I could look upon his face again." Even then the watchers by the bedside

knew that in the mother's heart there was a longing for something that had not come.

When the third son wrote his letter he told her about his beautiful home and how there were roses in the garden and along the walks. His children, who were her grandchildren, sent their love to her as she waited in her little home across the sea. When this letter was read, her friends who gathered around heard her say, "I am so glad that my boy has a home all his own and that he is teaching his children to love roses. I shall ask God to make him happy always." But as she uttered these words her friends wondered why her lips trembled. Little could they know of what the word roses meant to her as she lay in her weakness with her sons so far away.

The fourth son wrote her a letter, and his wife sent her a little package. On the day when the letter came the package was placed in her hands. She had one of her friends read the letter and then open the package for her. Sweet were the words that fell upon her ears. "These rose leaves, dearest Mother, grew from the root you gave me, long, long ago. Lovingly have I tended it because the roses are constant reminders of home and you." In her trembling hand she held the faded leaves that had been growing by her son's cottage doorway in the far-away land. She looked into the eyes of her

friends and said, "My youngest boy has remembered. May God keep a great love in his heart even as he has kept the rosebush growing by his door."

She turned her face for a moment towards the window. The watchers by the bedside saw a light in her eyes and they knew that in her heart there was a great peace.

HOW LOVE BRINGS US HOME

JIM was not getting on well at home. Somehow the members of his family never seemed to understand him. If he wanted to be out at a friend's home in the evening, it always seemed as though Father had other plans for him. Sister never did understand him. She would say the wrong thing or else not say anything at all. Then she was always tilting her head and acting in such a superior manner. Brother was too young to be a regular pal but he could at least be a bit accommodating. If ever Jim said to him, "Run upstairs and bring down my tennis racquet," just as likely as not Brother would reply, "Who ran your errands last year, kiddo?" If no one was around he might say things even worse than that. Mother was all right, some of the time, but usually she sided with Father and not with Jim.

Things would have been bad enough had the difficulty ended at home. But Jim was not understood at school. Several of his teachers during the few weeks before vacation had treated him with very little sympathy. The principal of the school had called him to the office one day and said, "James, I hear that you are not paying much attention to

your studies lately, and your marks are down. You can not play upon the team in tomorrow's game." This was enough, one would think, but several of the scholars said things about him and he overheard a few of their remarks. Even the policeman on the street wanted to know what was troubling him lately. The man he worked for Saturday afternoons told him he need not come next Saturday as he was going to give another boy the opportunity to earn the money.

Such a state of affairs was very serious. Jim felt it deeply. They simply did not understand him. He was a boy who was different from the other boys and they should treat him accordingly. In fact, Jim was grieved. Deep down in his soul he was wounded. The blame was theirs and he was a martyr to all their pet notions and unsympathetic ways. Some day he would leave the old town. When he came back the ones who had been so unfeeling in their conduct towards him would sit up and take notice. Suppose he should come back with a Rolls-Royce, or as a bank president? Then they would see. Guess his revenge would be sweet on that day. Why not go very soon? Perhaps tomorrow?

One morning, a few days after school had closed for the summer, Jim's father called to him and said, "Today I want you to take the old boxes down out

of the attic for your mother, and then help her until she says you may go."

Jim had another plan for the day, and he told his father so. He had planned to ride over to town on the trolley and do a bit of shopping for himself until lunch time. Then he was to have lunch with a particular friend of his. After that they were going to the ball park to watch the double header.

"Did you ask your mother about going away today?"

"No, but I see no harm in going to a ball game."

"Had you asked me if you could go?"

"No, but I am not a child any longer."

So they talked for several minutes, but Father just could not seem to understand Jim's point of view. Before Father drove away he said, "James, you have been pretty independent of late. From now on you must mind your mother and me. We will be fair in our decisions, but our boy must learn to obey." With that he drove away to the office.

Jim was hurt; but, more than that, he was angry. He went into the house and tried to get some sympathy from Mother. She agreed with Father. That made matters still worse. Brother saw the look on Jim's face and kept away from him. Sister smiled at him, but he thought it was a grin. It is not best for me to tell you what he said. All the long forenoon he carried boxes and mumbled to himself.

"So they think I am a baby, do they?"

"Well, I'll show them I am not."

"Some day they will understand me better and then they will be sorry."

"Suppose I were to die; guess they would remember then how hardhearted they have been."

So his poor abused mind ran on until he said to himself, "How would they feel if I really did run away from home?"

All through the lunch hour he thought about it. Here was a way of escaping the hardships of home and the lack of sympathy from friends who would not understand. Then they might appreciate him when he was far away.

After lunch his mother said, "James, you may rest this afternoon, but do not leave the yard. Why don't you take a bath and then read in the hammock out under the trees?" She tried to kiss him but he pulled away from her so she would know something of the depth of the wound in his spirit.

Not leave the yard! The very idea!! I am not going to tell you how dreadfully Jim suffered for the next hour or two.

When Father came home for supper he brought Mother with him. She had been out to a sewing meeting and was telling Father about the poor family for whom the ladies were making some new garments. Where was Jim? Sister had missed him

for a long time. Brother had not seen him since lunch.

Jim did not come at supper time and after supper when the dishes all were washed and dried there was never a sign of him. They called all through the house and no one answered. One of the neighbors' boys heard the calling and told them that he had seen Jim hurrying down the street early that afternoon. Father and Mother looked at each other and Sister had some sound advice to give to her parents about her brother.

A little later mother went up to Jim's room and found a note upon the bureau. She took it to Father and they read it together.

To my Father, Mother, Sister and Brother in Name:

You have stepped upon me and crushed me for the last time. You never did understand me and I never got any sympathy around this place. So when you think of Jim, remember that your harshness drove him away from home. Some day after many years I may come back and then we'll see who is right. Until then do not search for me, because I shall be far out in the cold world, fighting my way to the top. I forgive you all.

James.

Father looked through the window and never saw the house across the street. Mother put her

head on Father's shoulder and Father loaned her his big handkerchief. When they told Brother he burst right out and cried. Sister said, "Jim always was an idiot, but—" Then she went over to the couch and threw herself down upon it and buried her face in a great pillow.

Of course, something had to be done. Did Jim have any money? Yes, he had several dollars all his own. Where would he go? Mother had an idea. In a nearby city lived the boy they had met at the seashore the summer before. He and Jim had been rather friendly. This boy would not go to school and he was a problem to his father. Often letters had come to Jim, urging him to spend a few days in the city. Such a letter had come only the other day with a very warm invitation for Jim to come and to stay until after the Fourth of July. A train would reach the city about midnight. Perhaps Jim would be upon that train.

So a telegram was sent to the father of the boy. Of course no one slept in Jim's house. Where was Jim? Brother said, "When Jim comes back I'll run all the errands for him he wants me to." Sister remembered that Jim had some really wonderful qualities and that he would make a fine man. Just give him time and see. Father and Mother were silent, but their hearts were with their boy, wherever he might be.

Shortly after midnight a telegram came. "*Jim just telephoned from the station. He is coming to our home and I will follow your advice.*"

Then they all went to bed and some of them went to sleep.

Jim arrived in the city safely. He had not been long upon the train, however, before he began to wonder what they were going to have for supper at home. A lump came into his throat as he thought of his mother finding the note. "Sis will be free to have her own way, now." But somehow he did not find much pleasure in the thought. Brother could not argue with him over the end crust of toast at breakfast. This made him rather blue. But Father— "Well, Father meant well, but he just could not understand."

As Jim neared the city he thought of a number of things at home that he wanted.

The next morning the boy's father called Jim early and said, "Come, Jim. You have started out to make your fortune and your fame. You can begin to work in my factory. You will report every morning at seven o'clock. I will go with you today and introduce you to the foreman."

For the next few days Jim worked hard. He had to, and it was not much fun. His hands were blistered and his back ached. A kindly but firm woman came to see him and it was arranged that he was to

board and room at her house. The board was different from his mother's cooking. The room was small and the bed was hard. Still Jim worked, and if he complained it was only to himself. Sister was right; there was some good stuff in Jim. He never sent a letter home. True, he wrote several, but they were torn up and tossed into the drawer of an old table in his room.

Before many days had passed a letter came to Jim from Brother. How did they know he was here? The letter was written in a boyish scrawl, but Jim read and reread it many times.

Dear Jim:

I miss you dreadfully. Ginger caught a mouse in the shed the other day and old Buster chased Miss Snyder's cat up a tree. Cousin Ned was over for supper last night and we had ice cream and chocolate cake for dessert. There was a lot left. I've got a new jackknife and some new kite string. When you come home I'll help you carry your tennis racquet over to the school grounds.

Your loving

Brother.

P. S. Mary walked by our house last night and she asked me when you were coming home.

Jim did not go to sleep very early that night.

A few days later Jim found a letter awaiting him from Sister. I will not tell you all she wrote, but these are a few of the sentences he underscored as he read it and reread it again and again:

Dear Jim:

You know I wanted you to help me with the hammock the other day, and I could have cried when you were not here.—I am finishing that knitted tie I started for you last Christmas. It will be beautiful.—Father is talking of exchanging our old car for a new one. (He underscored this sentence twice.)*—There is to be a party over at Jane's home next Friday night and I have a new dress.—When you come home I will tell you what Mary said to me just yesterday. Good night, Jim dear.*

Your loving
Sister.

That night Jim remembered that Sister had led her class in school and that she could swim across the river and back without being out of breath. Her cheeks were as pink as any cheeks he ever had seen and she didn't use paint, either.

In about a week Jim found another letter beside his plate when he returned for supper. He knew the writing. Who could mistake that bold, dashing hand? It was from Father. Jim opened it and spent

much time reading it before he ate anything. These were the sentences he remembered after he was in bed and the lights were out.

Dear Jim:

I have exchanged the old car for a new one. It is a beauty.—I miss you, Jim, more than I can tell you.—Perhaps I was stern at times, but I loved you so, James boy, that I wanted you to be the best man you possibly could be.—I know that no boy can be a fine man unless he learns to obey.—When you make your fame and your fortune no one will be more proud than your father.—If you should want to come home, let me know when you are to arrive and I will meet you at the train. The new car will take the Station Hill on high.

Your lonely
Dad.

That night Jim thought until it was almost morning. Father did mean well. He always could be depended upon to stand by a fellow if he thought he was right. He had worked too hard, for years, and he needed a vacation. Perhaps dear old Dad was lonely. Then Jim's pillow was wet and could it talk it could tell a story of a boy who had learned a lesson.

A few days later Father drove Mother to the

station. Her face was as wonderful as the face of an angel when she kissed him goodbye. "Hurry back as soon as you can," said Father.

"I will let you know about meeting the train," replied Mother.

Two days later a brand new car drove up to the station many minutes before it was time for the train to arrive from the city. Father was at the wheel and Sister and Brother were on the seat beside him. Their eyes were shining with a wonderful light.

After the train pulled in they saw Mother coming to meet them. Beside her, and holding her arm, was Jim.

Had you been there a few minutes later you would have seen Jim sitting beside Father, driving the new car up the Station Hill, and he took it on high.

THE END

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The dreams of youth

5/3	Truedson	24 SEP 1928	18 APR 1938	Ward	19 MAY 1938
2/23	Dubois	14 MAR 1929	22 OCT 19[illegible]	Helen	24 NOV 19[illegible]

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